



INDEPENDENT

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Peace dawns for Balkans

Deal that will end carnage is imminent



Victims of war: Refugee children whose future is blighted Photograph: Rex Features

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia's Muslim-led government are expected to announce a historic peace settlement for former Yugoslavia this weekend, ending Europe's bloodiest conflict in 50 years.

Senior US officials attending peace talks in Dayton, Ohio, said the three Balkan delegations had narrowed their differences on most issues, and were within reach of a final agreement. "The hope is to be able to announce initial terms on an agreement Monday or Sunday night," said a senior US official travelling to Dayton with the US Defense Secretary, William Perry.

A settlement, if concluded, would end a war in which as many as 200,000 people have been slaughtered and up to 3 million displaced from their homes. The conflict, which erupted in June 1991, has produced such savagery against civilians that the United Nations felt obliged to establish a war crimes tribunal that has so far indicted 52 people, including several Serb and Croat leaders. The Ohio talks were placed under a news blackout from the start on 1 November as a way of concentrating the minds of delegates on securing an agreement. But signs mounted rapidly yesterday that a deal was in the offing, as Mr Perry flew to Dayton, swiftly followed by the US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, who cut short a visit to Japan.

Anthony Lake, President Bill Clinton's national security adviser, was reporting to the President last night after secretly visiting Dayton on Thursday. A US official said the trips of Mr Lake, Mr Perry and Mr Christopher could be taken as evidence that a settlement was close.

The breakthrough was confirmed by Croatia's President, Franjo Tudjman, who said an accord that would normalise relations between Serbia and Croatia was ready for signing. But in a sign that the Ohio talks had not resolved every out-

standing dispute, he said the delegations had agreed to postpone discussion of a possible exchange of territory between Croats and Serbs near Dubrovnik in southern Croatia.

In Paris, where a formal peace ceremony is likely to be held early next month, a French Foreign Ministry spokesman said: "The negotiations are advancing. The positions of the parties are growing closer." Noting pointedly that France had never before expressed optimism about the peace negotiations, he added: "We are optimistic."

The precise terms of the settlement remain secret, but

their general outline is clear. Bosnia will remain a united state in its pre-war borders, but will be divided into a Muslim-Croat federation with 51 per cent of the land and a Bosnian Serb entity with 49 per cent. The central Bosnian government in Sarajevo will have relatively limited powers, but will be Bosnia's official face to the outside world. The aim is to prevent areas under Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Croat control from seeking to unite with Serbia and Croatia, a step that would reduce Bosnia to a vulnerable Muslim-inhabited core.

The Serbs will be permitted

a corridor linking their lands in northern and eastern Bosnia, and the Muslim-led government will keep the eastern enclave of Gorazde. One unresolved problem remains the Bosnian Serb demand for access to the Adriatic Sea. Sarajevo, under siege from April 1992 by Serb forces who wanted to partition the city into Serb and Muslim sectors, will be reunited with full freedom of movement for all citizens. Refugees from all parts of the capital will be able to return to their homes, and it is expected that some districts will preserve a Serb majority.

One long-standing obstacle to a settlement was the insistence of Serbia's President, Slobodan Milosevic, that UN sanctions against his country should be fully lifted. A US official, without giving details, said this difficulty had been overcome.

Earlier, the State Department spokesman, Nicholas Burns, had said Serbia would not be allowed to renew its membership of key international institutions, such as the UN, the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, unless it co-operated with the UN war crimes tribunal. The tribunal wants a number of Bosnian Serb and Croatian Serb leaders handed over for trial, including Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic, accused of massacring up to 6,000 Muslims in Srebrenica last July, but it is unlikely they could be turned in without Mr Milosevic's co-operation.

The settlement, if agreed in its entirety, will represent a significant achievement, but could prove vulnerable to pressures in coming years. In particular, the vast population transfers induced by the war mean that the Muslim-Croat zone in Bosnia is likely to be drawn into Croatia's orbit and the Serb zone into Serbia's orbit. The settlement seeks to prevent Bosnia's partition, but the mixed-nationality communities that were Bosnia's strength may now have gone forever.

Carnage set to end, page 13

CHILDREN OF WAR APPEAL

The six million who need your help

The Independent today launches the Children of War Appeal, a special plea to help the child victims of the war ravaged countries of the former Yugoslavia this Christmas.

Peace may be at last but the damage for the Balkans but the damage of four years of conflict remains. None of the region's 24 million people have been left untouched and its 6 million children face a lifetime suffering from the traumas of war.

For these children the main struggle will be psychological, coping with the loss of parents, siblings and family. But there is a need for medical aid, food, shelter. There are also thousands struggling to be reunited with their families.

Livelihoods have evaporated and homes razed. In 1995 alone 500,000 were made homeless. UNICEF describes the registration of displaced children in Bosnia as being in disarray. Some have spent up to four years living in camps or with host families and relatives scattered from Austria to Australia. "The children of former-Yugoslavia have suffered terribly

The scars will take a long time to heal," says Lord Owen, the former EU mediator.

For children the situation is frightening. They are the generation who will rebuild Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia. The future is theirs - but it is blighted by poor nutrition, lack of housing, racial hatred and the loss of years of education.

This Independent is asking its readers to support these children and the aid agencies working to help them. Four agencies have been chosen: the International Red Cross, Save the Children, War Child and Child Advocacy International. All four will go on working long after the last bullet has been fired.

Over the weeks up to Christmas we will be detailing the projects we would like you to support, starting on Monday with an account of the work being undertaken by the Red Cross in Sarajevo, supplying 46,000 schoolchildren aged seven to 14 with hot soup and a sandwich each day this winter. Children of War, page 13

Author makes history with serial thriller

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Media Correspondent

Stephen King, the best-selling horror author, has clinched a unique publishing deal that will result in his next novel being released in six monthly instalments.

The novel will have the overall title of *The Green Mile* and will be published by Penguin, beginning in March next year. Each instalment will be a mass-market paperback of 96 pages, priced at £1.99.

To add to the novelty - and the publicity - King says he is writing the book as a serial novel, so that readers will begin reading it before he has finished writing it. The first two parts are thought to be complete.

The idea was popularised in the nineteenth century when au-

thors such as Dickens and Dostoevsky published in serial form but in magazines rather than self-contained books.

The first instalment, *The Two Dead Girls*, will be published in March, with the rest following at monthly intervals. The novel is set in America's Deep South in the 1930s and focuses on a man condemned to the electric chair.

"It's very exciting for us. Everybody is enormously excited by this. We will publish 2 million copies of the first instalment," Peter Mayer, chief executive of the Penguin Group, said from New York yesterday.

Some observers said King's decision to sell the world rights to the project to Penguin rather than his usual UK publisher, Hodder, was a slap in the face. But the British company round-

ly denied that was the case. "We are publishing three Stephen King novels next year, two in hardback and one in paperback. We would have felt it was a bit much to take on a further one," said Tim Hely Hutchinson, Hodder's chief executive.

Either way, Hodder had little choice. King is understood to have personally approached Mr Mayer with the idea of a serial novel because he was so impressed with Penguin's 60p mini-books. Penguin publishes King in the US and has a big Commonwealth operation.

The author says in the foreword to his first instalment that he was drawn to the project because he wanted to try something different. "I like the high-wire aspect of it. Fall down on the job, fail to carry it through, and all at once about

a million readers are howling for your blood."

It is not clear how much Penguin stands to gain. Although King is one of the world's best-selling writers, averaging UK sales of more than half a million a paperback, sales of the instalments are unlikely to be consistent and the author's advance will have been high. The company stands, however, to make £4 more for the entire novel than the usual £5.99 price for a King paperback.

Trade reaction was interested but sceptical. "I think this is something King wants to do for fun, but I think people would rather have the whole book at once," one senior publisher said. Another was more optimistic: "A lot of extra people will probably buy the books. I think it's possibly a good idea."



King: Spinning out suspense with horror in instalments

Stressed MPs too tired for sex

JOHN REINTOUL
Political Correspondent

Good news for John Major's war on "bleaze" - MPs have admitted they are too tired to have sex. But, according to a new study, they have the consolation of eating, drinking and smoking too much.

"Levels of emotional stress had increased considerably" among MPs since 1992, according to a study by occupational psychologist Ashley Weinberg, and their satisfaction with their work has decreased.

Of a sample of 93 MPs, nearly half (44 per cent) reported stress symptoms of tiredness

and exhaustion, over a third (38 per cent) reported a decline in interest in sex and 37 per cent reported a lack of sleep.

Nearly all MPs said they spent too little time with their partners and children, while most found it "difficult to cut off from work when at home, with stress from the workplace contributing to tension at home".

Mr Weinberg, of Manchester University, studied the impact of the "Jopling reforms" of the Commons timetable, which were introduced in January of this year. Designed to "humanise" working practices at Westminster, these involved the virtual abolition of all-night ses-

sions and the addition of morning sessions on Wednesday.

Four-fifths of Mr Weinberg's sample said the reforms had made things easier, while one-fifth had noticed no difference or said things had got worse.

Nearly all MPs, 95 per cent, said they worked more than 55 hours a week, with nearly half, 46 per cent, claiming to work more than 70 hours.

Despite the reforms, 45 per cent of the sample reported a "frequent or occasional tendency to eat, drink or smoke too much".

Mr Weinberg's report will be published in the Commons magazine on Monday.



IN BRIEF

Found at all-time low
The pound declined to an all-time low against the German mark and other currencies yesterday, thanks to expectations of a generous Budget. Page 22

NHS 'rationing'
Rationing is "sweeping the NHS", Labour's health spokeswoman said as a survey showed many health authorities limiting, barring or planning to reduce a range of services. Page 8

King mistrial
The trial of the boxing promoter Don King on charges of defrauding Lloyd's of London ended in near-farce after judge declared a mistrial. Page 15

Storm stops play
A storm halted England's first Test against South Africa when they were 381 for 9. Page 32

Today's weather
Dry and sunny, but cold with frost early and late. Page 2

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مكتبة الامم المتحدة

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news

Summit call: Prime Minister urges Sinn Fein to make concessions over IRA arms as 80 prisoners are freed

Major moves to break Irish peace stalemate

COLIN BROWN and DAVID McKITTRICK

John Major is expected to write today to John Bruton, the Irish Prime Minister, calling for an early summit on British proposals for ending the stalemate over the Northern Ireland peace process.

As more than 80 IRA and loyalist prisoners were released yesterday in a confidence-building measure, Mr Major warned that Sinn Fein had still "a long way to go" before it could enter talks. He called on Sinn Fein leaders to make concessions over their refusal to countenance the decommissioning of IRA weapons before being admitted to all-party talks.

He said: "Sinn Fein have been taking a very hard line in negotiations for some time. What Sinn Fein is saying about seeking peace is very much hope is true. But Sinn Fein have a long way still to go. I hope we can still get Sinn Fein into talks with the other parties but Sinn Fein have to accept they too have to make concessions. It isn't possible to enter into negotiations with a private army at their back. That is not the way to get into democratic politics."

He is to ask Mr Bruton for

"an early summit date - I hope it will not be too long". But the issue of IRA weapons remains the stumbling block which the two sides have to overcome. The Irish government is keen to proceed to all-party talks without it being used as a pre-condition that the IRA should begin dismantling first before sitting down at the table.

Mr Major is adamant that some progress will have to be made before the Ulster Unionists will accept Sinn Fein in the talks. Mr Bruton and Mr Major will discuss putting off that crucial question until February, when the ground has been laid for the all-party talks to begin.

The Prime Minister will propose in his letter the twin-track strategy which has Dublin's broad support - an international commission chaired by George Mitchell, President Clinton's economic adviser, to deal with the arms question; and simultaneous bilateral talks with each of the parties leading up to all-party talks. The process will be launched before the end of the year. Mr Major will include the idea by David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, for early elections to an elected assembly in Ulster.

Although there was rejoicing



Walk to freedom: Four loyalist prisoners leaving the Maze prison, near Belfast, after their early release yesterday

Photograph: Kelvin Boyes

among individual families of prisoners who were reunited as they were released yesterday, there was no sign that the move would infuse any new momentum into the peace process.

While extreme loyalist groups are displaying no real signs of any internal strains, Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein's pres-

ident, continued to warn that the process was in danger. He said yesterday: "If we continue not to tackle the causes of conflict the conflict will re-occur. I say that with great regret and sadness and with a great sense of fear. I think it is patently clear that the British succeeded in making the peace process a

high-wire act. That high-wire is now stretched like elastic."

The prison releases follow the passage through Parliament of a regulation increasing remission for some prisoners from one-third to a half. The Government's position is that there can be no amnesty, but that some early releases are possi-

ble on condition the ceasefires hold. Sir Patrick Mayhew, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, retains the power to recall those released to prison.

Republicans have characterised the remission measure as belated, grudging and an inadequate response to the IRA cessation of August 1994. The

Irish Republic unconditionally released several dozen republican prisoners within months of the ceasefire. Those freed yesterday were almost equally divided between republicans and loyalists: 53 had been held in the Maze prison near Belfast, while six more prisoners are due to be freed before Christmas.

Home rule: Minister reveals on television how he considered devolution but rejected it

Forsyth admits he had plans for Scots' parliament

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES and JOHN ARLIDGE

Michael Forsyth, Secretary of State for Scotland, dramatically revealed last night that he had considered setting up a Scottish parliament - but had rejected the idea for practical reasons.

Mr Forsyth made the disclosure in a BBC2 *Scottish Lobby* programme, to be broadcast tomorrow, but said the creation of such a body could not solve the so-called "West Lothian" question - why Scottish MPs should have a vote on English affairs but not the other way around.

John Major's alternative plans for Scottish democratic reform will be no substitute for a Scottish parliament, opposition parties insisted yesterday.

There were growing indica-

tions yesterday, however, that the Scottish Grand Committee could be given new powers to debate, amend and vote on contentious Scottish legislation and to conduct the committee stage of Bills, despite the heavy Labour domination of the body.

At present, the committee, comprising all Scotland's 73 MPs, meets regularly north of the border and in Westminster to debate legislation before they go into committee stage.

Mr Forsyth said yesterday: "I cannot reveal the details but we are talking about here is ensuring we have more scrutiny of Scottish affairs and that ministers are held to account."

There are also expectations

that the Government plans to devolve more power to local authorities and school boards.

George Robertson, Labour spokesman on Scottish affairs, criticised a "panicky but well-packaged PR stunt." He said: "If I thought it was going to give real decisive power to Scottish MPs over Scottish legislation, then I think we would take it seriously. But it seems to be little more than a cosmetic operation."

The unveiling of the initiative on Wednesday week, St Andrew's Day, clashes with the launch of the Labour and Liberal Democrat-supported Scottish Constitutional Convention blueprint for a Scottish parliament.

Jim Wallace, leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, said: "Further Tory tinkering is no substitute for a Scottish parliament... The Tories are responding to the agenda set by the Constitutional Convention."

The difference is that our plan for a Scottish parliament has the real interests of the people of Scotland at its heart."

But while the Government would retain the right of the House of Commons to have the final say on Scottish Bills at Third Reading, it would be under strong political pressure not to use the Westminster parliament to unravel amendments. It often often not to reverse House of Lords amendments in the Commons.

The pressure to adopt a similar approach to Scottish affairs would be greater, because the Grand Committee is composed of elected representatives.

The Scottish National Party, which backs an independent Scotland, moved swiftly to exploit aspects of the Prime Min-



Michael Forsyth: Focus on scrutiny of Scottish affairs

ister's interview in yesterday's *Independent*. "Nobody should be in any doubt that Scotland should be a separate nation," Mr Major had said.

Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, said the Tories' limited proposals would only serve to underline the need for a fully independent Scotland. "I think the Prime Minister, by trying to concede more... is actually underlining the democratic deficit in Scotland," he said.

Dancer's jinx claims its fourth victim

MARIANNE MACDONALD

The curse of Darcy Russell descended again yesterday as the Royal Ballet's youngest female star lost another male partner, Zoltan Solymosi, after he fell out with the company director.

The handsome Hungarian dancer, who came to Covent Garden as a principal in January 1992, departed earlier this week. It was announced yesterday. A press statement blamed "irreconcilable differences with the company's director, Anthony Dowell, and senior artistic staff."

The dancer's departure will be a grievous loss to the talented Ms Russell, 27, who seems increasingly doomed in her search for a stable male partner. The rot started with Jonathan Cope, who accompanied her first leading role in 1989, but left

ballet eight months later to go into business. Next came Robert Hill, a tall, romantic American whose career ended with a scripp injury.

Next came the much-heralded partnership between Russell and Irek Mukhamedov, the former Bolshoi star - but they turned out to be mismatched.

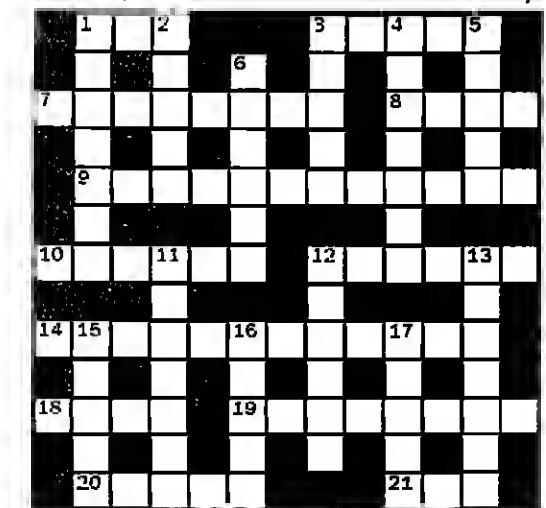
Zoltan Solymosi, 27, was the latest hope. He was one of that rare band of male dancers tall enough to partner Russell, who is 5ft 7in, and strong enough to complement her powerful style. By his own admission Solymosi is "a passionate, very temperamental and very angry" dancer, and it was almost certainly this which led to his downfall.

The pair were scheduled to dance together in *Apollo* next Thursday and Saturday. Jonathan Cope, who returned to ballet in 1992, will stand in.

concise crossword

No. 2835 Saturday 18 November

By Aehl



- ACROSS**
- 1 Thing for writing (3)
 - 3 Join, unasked (3,2)
 - 7 Become smaller (8)
 - 8 Brings into open (4)
 - 9 Spouse's offspring (4-8)
 - 10 Laughing animals (6)
 - 12 Athlete (6)
 - 14 It helps fish to go up to spawn (6-6)
 - 18 Man, say (4)
 - 19 Came before (8)
 - 20 Nosey (5)
 - 21 Hard fruit (3)
- DOWN**
- 1 In religious way (7)
 - 2 Saltpetre (5)
 - 3 Playing all together (5)
 - 4 Dangled (anag)(7)
 - 5 Tend (5)
 - 6 Balls (6)
 - 11 Book of Bible (7)
 - 12 Lector (6)
 - 13 Serious (7)
 - 15 Crime (5)
 - 16 Himalayan country (5)
 - 17 Remove water from (5)

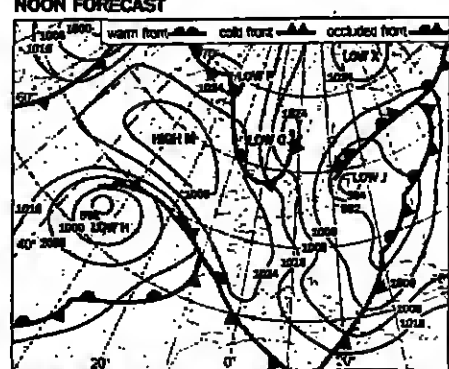
Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

Across: 1. Scissors, 3. Caps (Sawcap), 5. Oatmeal, 9. Drama, 10. Keen, 11. Ah int, 12. Ratatouille, 15. Backache, 17. Ugh, 31. Enthus, 21. Extreme, 22. Plea, 23. Traps, Down: 1. Student, 2. Bile, 3. Establishment, 4. Cadenza, 5. Plant, 6. Monk, 7. Lagoon, 12. Rubber, 13. Ocarina, 14. Ingress, 18. Item, 19. Sloop

Notes

weather

NOON FORECAST



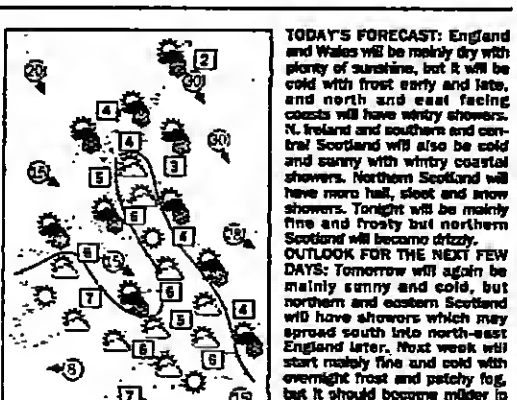
High 11 will move south-east with little change in pressure. Low 6 and 7 will move south-east, while Low 8 remains over moving.

WORLD WEATHER - Forecast for 22 November

Region	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	12-18	10-15	10-15	London	12-18	10-15	London	12-18	10-15
Birmingham	11-17	9-14	10-15	Birmingham	11-17	9-14	Birmingham	11-17	9-14
Manchester	10-16	8-13	10-15	Manchester	10-16	8-13	Manchester	10-16	8-13
Newcastle	11-17	9-14	10-15	Newcastle	11-17	9-14	Newcastle	11-17	9-14
Glasgow	10-16	8-13	10-15	Glasgow	10-16	8-13	Glasgow	10-16	8-13
Belfast	11-17	9-14	10-15	Belfast	11-17	9-14	Belfast	11-17	9-14

LIGHTING TIMES - Sun rises 7:22 am, sets 4:02 pm

AIR QUALITY - London: Good, Birmingham: Good, Manchester: Good, Newcastle: Good, Glasgow: Good, Belfast: Good



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Manchester	10-16	8-13	10-15	Manchester	10-16	8-13	Manchester	10-16	8-13
Newcastle	11-17	9-14	10-15	Newcastle	11-17	9-14	Newcastle	11-17	9-14
Glasgow	10-16	8-13	10-15	Glasgow	10-16	8-13	Glasgow	10-16	8-13
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AIR QUALITY - London: Good, Birmingham: Good, Manchester: Good, Newcastle: Good, Glasgow: Good, Belfast: Good

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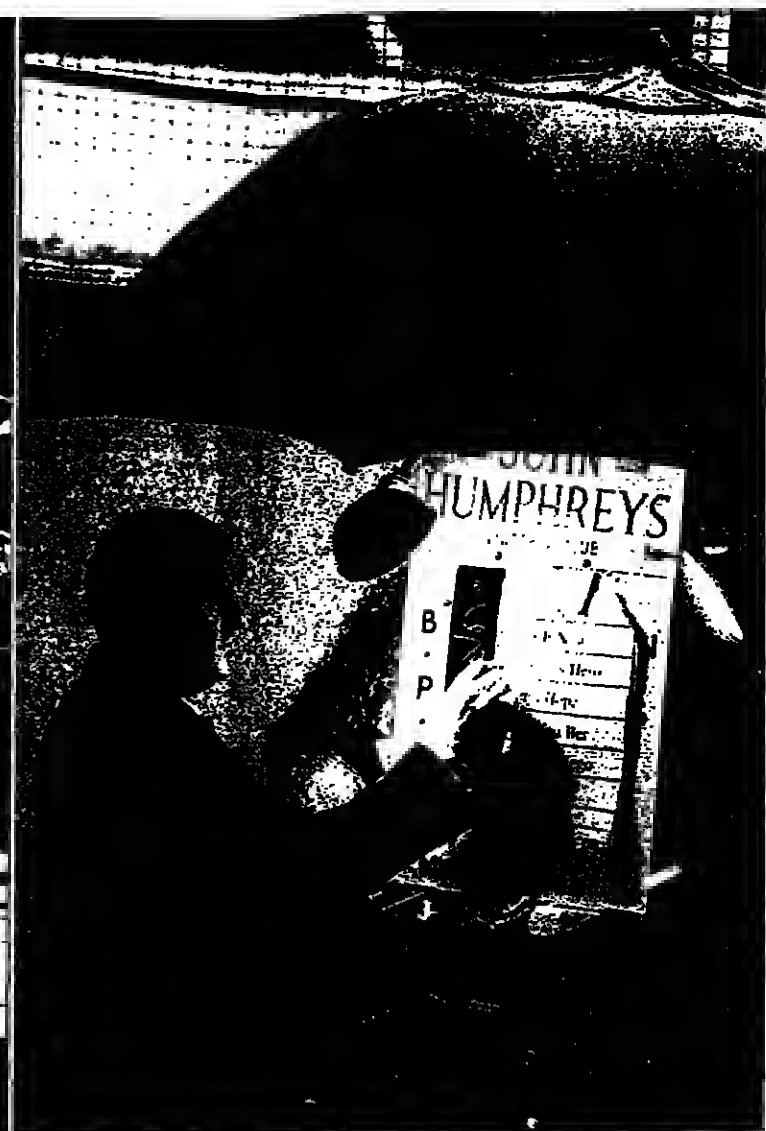
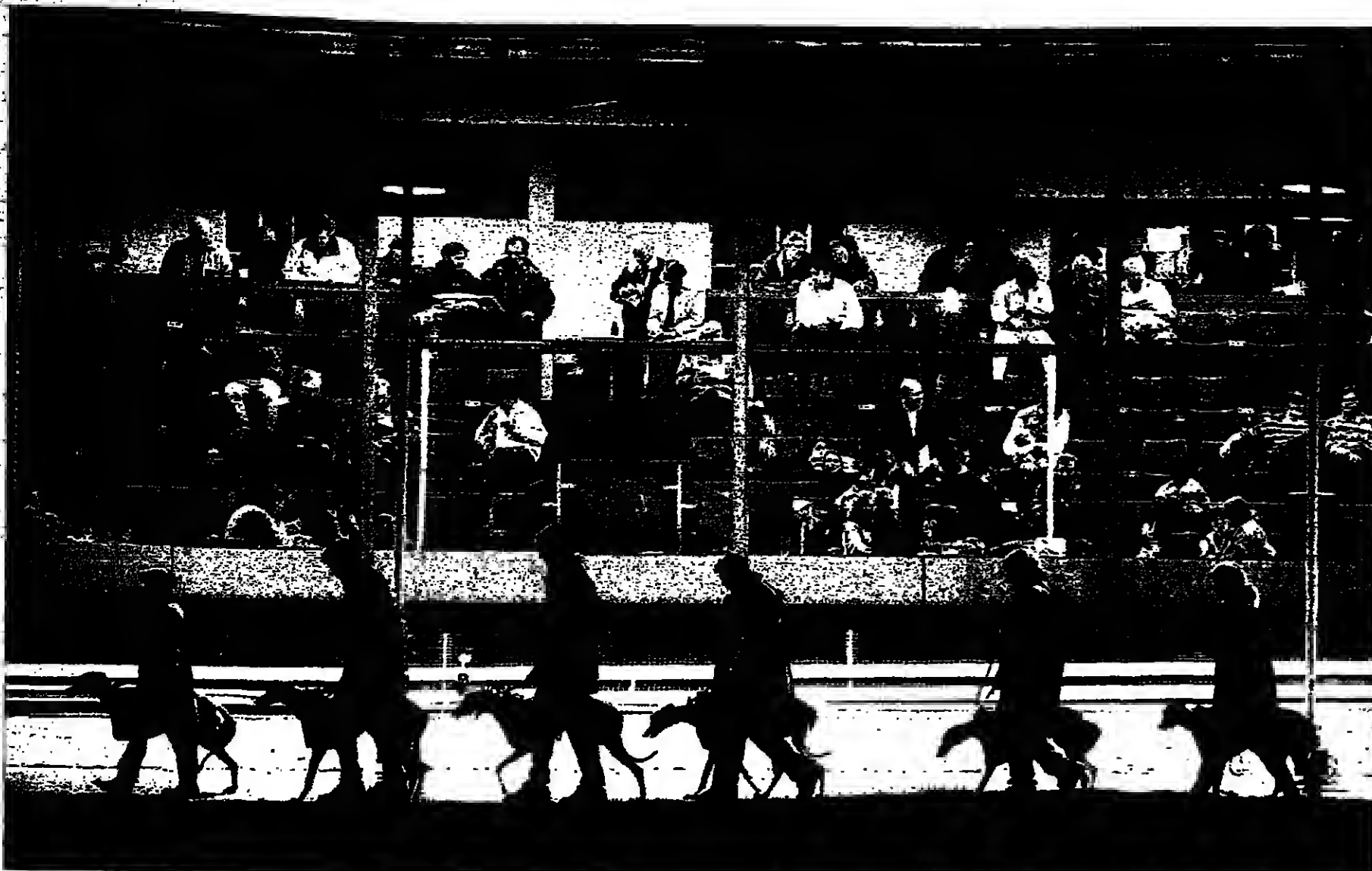
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Dogs, drugs and scandal in a twilight world



Top dogs: Punters study the form (above) as trainers walk the greyhounds around the track at Catford stadium in south-east London. Right: a bookmaker marks up the odds before the start of a race

Photographs: Peter Macdiarmid

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

Scam at the track: Syndicate's doping of seven greyhounds throws a sport into turmoil

The world of greyhound racing is in a flutter – someone has been doping the dogs.

After years of hard work by greyhound track owners to expunge the sport's image of shady dealings watched over by old men in flat caps, a new scandal has hit the dog-racing world. It has emerged that, in an ambitious attempt to fix two races, seven greyhounds were drugged at Catford stadium in south-east London. One bookmaker who witnessed the race said: "I couldn't believe it when they came out of the trap – one dog practically fell over. It was obvious something fishy was up."

The last doping scandal was about five years ago in Canterbury, Kent. However, at Catford in 1983, two trainers, Alf Ellis and Arthur Boyce, were each fined £100 after five dogs were tested positive.

The authorities were alerted to the most recent "sting" when

betting shops throughout Catford had a flurry of unusual and highly risky wagers. Several people placed bets on two races and named dogs in each to come first and second.

Suspensions were confirmed when the fancied dogs duly took the first two places at the 7.49pm and the 8.19pm at Catford last month. Urine samples were taken and found to be positive. The losing dogs had been fed with beta-blockers, which make the animals lethargic. However, members of the team that pulled off the scam were not able to collect their winnings – about £8,000 – because the bookmakers were told to withhold all payments until an inquiry was completed.

Now police have been brought in to investigate. Questions are also being asked about the track's urine testing programme which initially passed all the dogs as drug free. It was

only after more extensive tests at Newmarket in Suffolk that the doping was identified. The dogs were probably drugged either at the trainers' kennels or shortly before the Catford races.

The management of the track, which was built in the

1930s and is one of London's largest, yesterday insisted the testing measures were adequate. Frank Melville, chief executive of the regulators, the National Greyhound Racing Club, added that although the on-track tests were "basic", there were a number of other

security precautions. He said scams to fix races were "very, very, rare".

This sentiment was not shared among the 600 or so bookmakers and punters who turned up on a bitterly cold evening at Catford stadium on Thursday. One bookmaker

said: "The idea that the sport is completely clean is laughable."

Ann Beal, who was born prematurely at Harringay dog track in north London and had just watched the greyhound she owns come second, agreed. "I've seen some very dodgy things going on and it's got a lot

worse. When big money is involved people don't mind how they get a result," she said.

"I have been coming here since I was a kid, but you get a lot of riff-raff going on. They end up losing money, drinking too much, and having a fight." One tipster said: "Drugging dogs is a bit over the top, most will slow them down with a big bowl of water or a couple of steak and kidney pies before the race."

All those questioned derided the most recent dopers as "amateurs" for trying to pull off a scam that was bound to cause suspicion.

Despite the criticisms the track management insists that the sport's image has changed and that this was a rare example of cheating.

Mike Raper, operations manager for the Greyhound Racing Association, said: "The image of cloth caps and sawdust

is outdated. We have executive suites at some of our tracks now. You get businessmen going and a lot of young people – we've started serving designer lagers as well."

On Thursday, there was not much evidence of yuppies at the Catford dogs. There were three Japanese businessmen and one mobile telephone, but the vast bulk of the crowd was made up of middle aged men in jumpers, tough looking south Londoners out with their mates and girlfriends, and the famous old men with flat caps, long coats, and wet noses.

The restaurant in the £3.50 side of the stadium was full, but most people opted for chips and burgers in the bar or opposite in the £2.50 sector.

Barry Mulligan claimed popularity within the sport was declining. "There's not much young blood coming into the game. When I was 18 or 19 we used to go to the dogs five nights a week, now it's full of old blokes like me," he said.

Working a sting with Vaseline and gum

LIZ SEARL

The twilight world of greyhound racing has many attractions for the casual punter. Unfortunately, it has also been prey to scam and scandal, an alluring arena for those seek to profit from bending the rules.

At many of the smaller tracks – especially on those which do not operate under the rules of the National Greyhound Racing Club – a variety of methods

have been used to pull off a sting.

Despite improved checks and testing, they can still go undetected. Vaseline smeared in the dog's eyes will slow it down on the track, and small pieces of chewing gum can be stuck in between the dog's toes to irritate the animal and stop it from running at its usual pace.

Feeding the dog at the wrong time will throw it off balance, and some consortiums resort to

the use of travel sickness tablets, speed-up drugs or hard narcotics to reduce the animal's performance and balance.

It has even been alleged in the past that some trainers resort to the use of "fingers" – several dogs from the same litter which are similar in appearance but which are of varying ability. Although dogs need to be registered to race with a tattoo behind one ear, it is suggested that there are ways of dupli-

cating the tattoo. And, apparently, encouraging the dog to masturbate before a race will keep it in the stragglers.

But whatever the scam, the intention remains the same, to slow down the dog for a number of races in order to bring down the odds for a future event. There can be fines for a drastic improvement in a dog's performance, but there is always the possibility that the cheats are a step ahead of the detectives.

Bishop puts pressure on Dean to resign

ANDREW BROWN
Religious Affairs Correspondent

The Bishop of Lincoln, the Rt Rev Robert Hardy, suggested yesterday that the Dean, the Very Rev Brandon Jackson, should resign because of the "fear and the sense of intimidation" which many members of the cathedral staff had experienced.

The civil war in Lincoln Cathedral had been dormant since July, when the Dean was acquitted on charges of adultery after a three-day trial. But after the annual meetings of the paid staff of the cathedral, and of its governing body, the Greater Chapter, the Sub-Dean, Canon Rex Davis, issued a statement which read: "I, for one, cannot any longer maintain an ethical spinelessness which colludes with his manifest contempt for the Bishop, for this cathedral, for his colleagues and for the staff which so loy-

ally and silently make the life of this cathedral possible."

The Sub-Dean has long been an implacable enemy of Dean Jackson's, even though the two men once spent a year in counselling sessions with other members of the chapter in an attempt to overcome their mutual loathing.

Bishop Hardy's personal assistant, Canon Raymond Rodger, said: "There is considerable ill-feeling among the staff, and the Dean has lost their confidence. The matter has gone too far, and it is down to the Dean to take whatever steps are appropriate. That could well be his resignation."

The Dean, 60, cannot be sacked and was appointed by the Prime Minister, then Margaret Thatcher, rather than the Bishop. But Canon Rodger said that discussions would take place between all the parties involved.

Bishop Hardy told BBC Ra-

dio Lincoln: "It is a matter for the Dean to decide whether he wishes to resign. It is certainly very difficult to see a positive way forward."

"I have tried personally to make a bridge towards the Dean and I have failed. If there is a continuing failure I should feel it my responsibility to discuss the matter once more with the Archbishop and the Crown. That will be sooner rather than later."

After his acquittal in the summer, Dean Jackson had suggested that the Bishop resign. Bishop Hardy refused then, and added yesterday: "I feel that I have got to stay with it and resolve the situation."

The struggle in Lincoln goes back at least as far as Dean Jackson's arrival in 1989, on a mission from God and the Prime Minister, as he conceived it, to break the power of the other four canons of the cathedral chapter, headed by Canon



Dean Jackson: Cannot be sacked from his post

Davis. He tried to force Canon Davis's resignation for exhibiting the cathedral's copy of the Magna Carta in Australia for six months on a fund-raising trip

which ended up losing £56,000. Eventually, the Bishop demanded that all parties, including the Dean and Sub-Dean resign. All refused.

Carey threatens to be 'Birt of the Church'

ANDREW BROWN

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, could become the "John Birt of the Church of England" by trying to squeeze it into the mould of a managed, product-driven organisation, a leading sociologist of religion said yesterday.

Professor Richard Roberts, of the University of Lancaster, told a conference on "harmful religion" at King's College, London, that the Turnbull Commission's proposals for a radical reform of the Church of England's structure, which Dr Carey hopes the Synod will approve next year, would destroy the morale of the working clergy. He added that the proposals would produce a "harmful religion, grounded in deprofessionalisation and the 'McDonaldisation' of religion, seeking ever greater uniformity, predictability, and control". The Turnbull Commission proposed that the Church of

England be run in future by a National Council headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with a majority of its members appointed by him. The plan has already been denounced by traditionalists as producing a "Carey's curia" in which power would be centralised.

Prof Roberts said that the commission's report showed the bishops of the Church, as they have traditionally done, absorbing the values of the ruling elite of society and mistaking these for the Christian gospel. Since the élite of modern society is now managerial, he said, bishops would deliver the gospel as a product. "This is an evangelical take-over of the Church of England," Prof Roberts said.

However, this ideology was already outdated. "The Church of England today is at the stage that British Leyland was at in the 1970s. This sort of change didn't work for British Leyland and it won't work for the Church of England..."

"The subordinate staff in the organisation (the parish and sector clergy) may well rapidly adapt to satisfying the performance indicators regardless of real outcomes, as has already happened in higher education and the health service."

These criticisms will resonate with large sections of the Church, one close observer of the commission's work said yesterday. Dr Carey's plans to transform the Church into a modern and manageable organisation have already suffered one recent setback with the rejection of proposals to abolish the "freehold" which gives about two-thirds of the parish clergy jobs to which they have a legal title.

The new General Synod will consider the Turnbull reforms when it meets at the end of this month. The legislation to implement the Commission's proposals will not now be drafted until after a debate on 29 November.

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news

Ford wildcat strikes continue over pay offer

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

Sporadic wildcat action continued at Ford yesterday bringing to more than 2,000 the number of workers involved in protest over a "final" pay offer which would give them a minimum of 9.25 per cent over two years.

Ford management acknowledged that the stoppages were unlawful, but decided they were "gestures" rather than a serious attempt to disrupt output. "We don't want to disturb the balance of industrial relations. Legal action would be unnecessarily provocative," the spokesman said.

He indicated however that if the strikes continued - they have already been repudiated by the unions - the company might consider litigation.

Night-shift workers at both the Dagenham assembly plant and the normally moderate Southampton complex continued the action started on Thursday and the day shift at the body works at the Essex plant also also walked out yesterday. Pro-

duction lines at both works started late in the wake of the walk-outs.

Management calculated that 960 Fiestas had been lost at Dagenham and 80 to 100 Transits at Southampton.

Shop stewards throughout Ford's 13-plant network yesterday began the consultation process over the offer which gives 4.75 per cent from next week and 4.5 per cent, or the inflation rate plus 0.5 per cent, next year, whichever is greater. Union representatives are to meet next Wednesday and are expected to call for further talks with management.

Steve Hart, full-time official of the Transport and General Workers' Union at the Dagenham plant predicted that his members would reject the proposed settlement.

"Given the productivity improvements delivered by workers, the package simply does not measure up to expectations. This was the year when we wanted a more generous response," he said.

The pay offer was inadequate and suggested improve-

ments on pension entitlements were insufficient. Unions also wanted to pursue their claim for a two-hour reduction in the working week to 37 hours.

Shop stewards at other plants however are more disposed to accept the offer. Convenors from Bridgend and representatives from Halewood have voted to accept.

Some union insiders believe that the 22,000 Ford production workers will accept the offer given that 4.75 per cent compares favourably with the 3 per cent going rate elsewhere and the inflation rate of 3.2 per cent.

There is a split in the union camp. The Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, which represents skilled workers, pushes for a reduction in the working week, while the T&G places more emphasis on pay.

The Ford spokesman said the package was a "very good offer" and that most workers had welcomed the pay increase.

Leaders of 10,000 workers at Vauxhall are predicting a large majority in favour of industrial action in a ballot over an offer of 7 per cent over two years.



Winter stoppage: A worker on the picket line outside Dagenham yesterday (Photograph: Edward Webb) and strikers at the Ford plant in 1985

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'New' workers try old tactics

BARRIE CLEMENT

Growing sense of grievance sees return of 70s-style militancy

Ford workers are far more docile than they were in the 1970s, but there are indications that over the last year they have felt increasingly aggrieved.

The 22,000 manual workers - down from 50,000 around 25 years ago - have seen production lines speeding and profitability improving. They now want a share of the changing fortunes of the company which posted a £25m pre-tax profit in 1994 compared with a £92m loss the previous year.

As one union official put it: "Higher productivity is not a theoretical calculation to my members. They have seen the line speeding up and they are sweating blood."

The typical Ford worker has more to lose from the kind of wildcat action staged within the last 48 hours than his predecessor of the 1970s. The average age of employees has also increased from late 20s to late 30s, and so they have greater commitments. With high unemployment, people are hanging on to their jobs for longer.

A far greater proportion are burdened with mortgage payments, many will be saving to go the United States on holiday rather than the Costa Brava, and others will be committed to regular monthly payments for household electronic equipment.

While in the Seventies, the unskilled and semi-skilled pro-

duction line workers, driving ageing cars, many more now take advantage of the 20 per cent in-house discount to buy new Ford vehicles.

The sense of community and solidarity is far more subdued than in the 70s. Many of the employees in Dagenham, for instance, which make up around 40 per cent of the total workforce, now live some way away from the factory. Most used to live in the sprawling council estates surrounding the plant.

Their standard of living has improved - largely through the greater availability of consumer goods, although their relative position in the pay league has remained steady. Car workers have always been near the top for production workers.

The proportion of union membership has hardly changed in the last quarter of a century. The Transport and General Workers' Union claims 100 per cent membership among line workers and even management concedes a proportion in excess of 90 per cent.

Perhaps more worrying for the Government than the present bout of pay militancy is that an increasing number of them seem to be deserting the Conservative Party for Tony Blair's new Labour.

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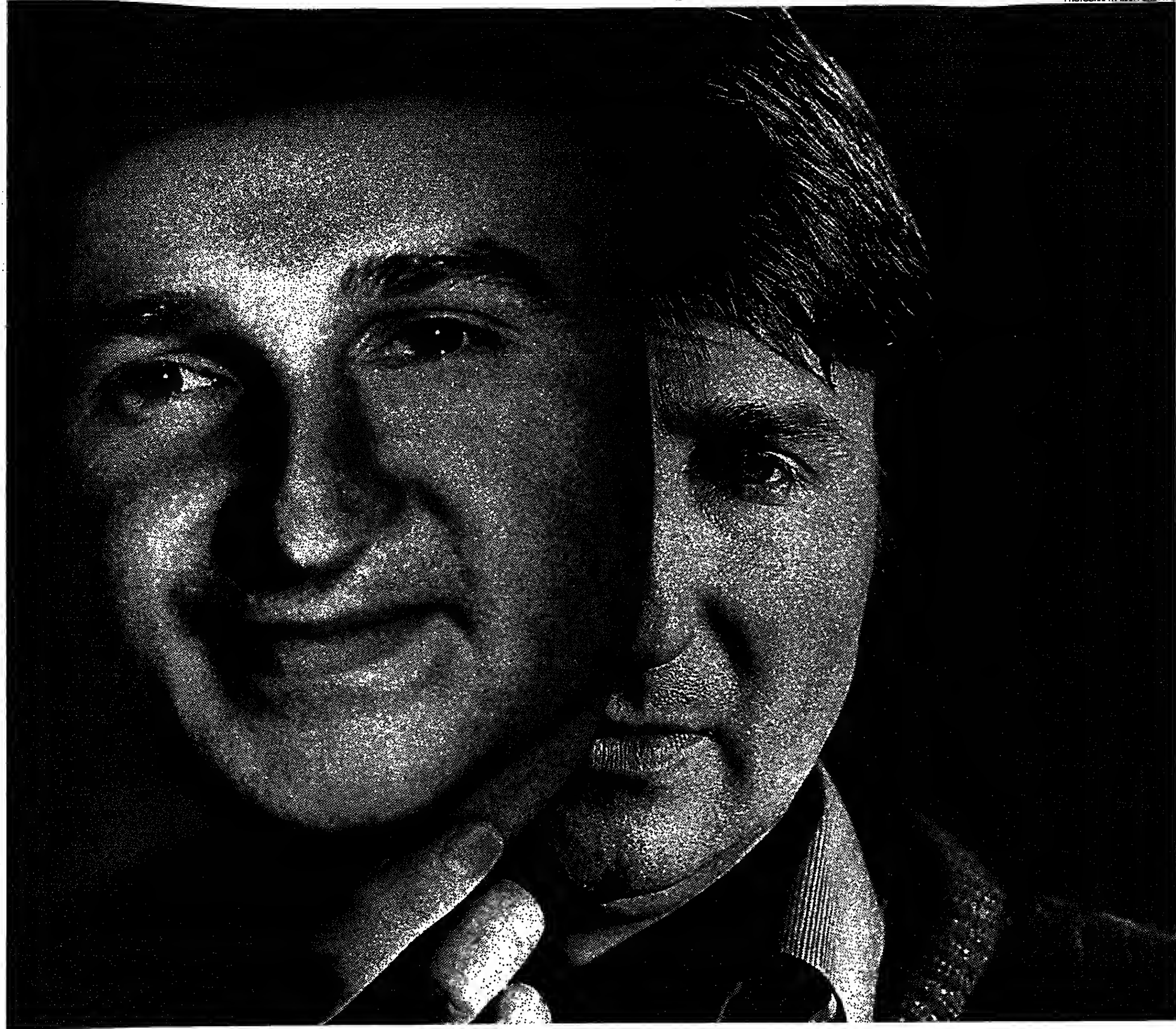
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National Lottery: Half of jackpot winners choose to remain in jobs and save their money rather than go for luxurious lifestyle

Modest millionaires who work, work, work

REBECCA FOWLER

The National Lottery has created an exclusive new club of cautious millionaires, who have invested two-thirds of their money, limited spending to new cars and houses and not given up the day job.

A survey of the top 200 winners, who have scooped around £150m between them in the first year of the lottery, shows that on average they have invested 51 per cent of their total win, 21 per cent in the bank.

Half have also continued to work for a living, with 17 per cent staying in the jobs they already had, and 33 per cent taking up new positions after paying off all their debts.

Among the new working millionaires is Bob Westland, 57, a sub-postmaster from Alloa in Scotland, who retired yesterday with his wife Anne, a deputy head teacher in a primary school. They hope to buy a local hotel and run it as a family business instead.

"The best thing about winning the lottery is knowing your children will be secure, and even more so your grandchildren, because you wonder what kind of jobs are going to be out there for them in the future," Mr Westland said. "They are going to reap the benefits of this, because at 57, I'm pretty set in my ways. It's great to know that they have that ahead of them. One of my sons drives HGV lorries, and he's already been able to buy his own so he's working for himself now."



Carry on grafting: Bob Westland is retiring as sub-postmaster in Pleau, Central Scotland, but will use his lottery winnings to run a local hotel

Photograph: Crawford Brown

So far the Westlands' most expensive purchase is a new car, a BMW, which they intended to buy anyway to replace their Vauxhall Cavalier. They will not move from their five-bedroomed semi-detached home

and have no immediate plans for a holiday.

The most popular purchase for winners is a new car, with 68 per cent buying at least one.

Lee Ryan, from Osbaston, in Leicestershire, has proved an

unusually extravagant winner opting for a Rolls-Royce, a Bentley, a Ferrari and a Porsche.

Unfortunately Ryan, who won £6.5m, will not be able to drive them for some time. He

was given an 18-month prison sentence for handling stolen vehicles before his jackpot win.

Almost half the big winners have bought a house, including Ryan who purchased a £1m farmhouse. A further 11 per

cent have bought a home for someone else and 51 per cent have taken a holiday.

According to Camelot, the National Lottery operator, the results do prove a jackpot win is life-transforming. "Today's

better, it has not been plain sailing for all of them.

Although on an average they give 14 per cent of their winnings away, the lottery has highlighted domestic rifts.

Mark Gardiner, a double glazing salesman who won half of the largest jackpot so far, £22.5m, received a claim from his estranged wife for half his fortune. He reportedly paid her £1m on their divorce.

Mr Gardiner also said he had been poured over him by people calling him a "rich bastard", and said he felt like a prisoner because of his fame.

The three best things about winning the lottery, according to the survey, are financial security, helping family and friends, and the ability to fulfil lifetime ambitions.

When winners are given their cheques, they are immediately advised to spend nothing and go on holiday to let the shock sink in. The most popular destinations are Barbados, the Bahamas and Disneyland.

Perhaps the modest winners so far are Esther Tracey, 24, from Poplar, east London, who won £14m. She bought her parents a Ford Escort, and still lives at home with them. And Mark Lund, 31, who won £5m, made his first purchase a season ticket for his local football team, Third Division Doncaster.

Yet despite their caution winners of the jackpot, which has created 132 millionaires, say their biggest regrets are that they did not win more, and they did not win it sooner.

Survey fuels concern over ticket sales to youngsters

The National Lottery watchdog is to publish a report on illegal sales of tickets to children following disclosures that they are regularly sold to under-16s, it was disclosed yesterday.

An academic retained by the Office of National Lottery has been gathering data from all over the country for some time, a spokesman for the organisation said yesterday.

Ofot said a survey carried out by trading standards officers in Devon had shown that tickets were regularly sold to children. The findings are to be passed to the police. "We take a serious view of selling to kids, it is against the law," said the Ofot spokesman.

One of Ofot's duties is to ensure that games did not encourage excessive gambling, and are not available to under-16s. But the onus was on the lot-

tery operator, Camelot, to educate retailers on how to deal with the age issue, it said.

A Camelot spokesman said it had not yet seen the results of the Devon survey, which showed that 50 per cent of 24 attempted purchases by under-age youngsters were successful. But it confirmed that it would investigate and suspend any retailer who knowingly sold to under-16s. "We try to reinforce the under-16s issue with retailers," the spokesman said. Recently a retailer in Liverpool had his lottery terminal removed following an investigation.

The Devon trading standards survey, which used children aged from 10 to 14, also showed that retailers sold solvents, cigarettes and inappropriate videos to under-age children. Devon's trading standards director, Steve Butterworth, said:

"Some retailers were not aware youngsters had to be 16 to buy a lottery ticket."

The Institute of Trading Standards Administration is holding talks with the police about the need for a national enforcement regime for lottery tickets.

The Gaming Board, the betting industry's official regulator, wants the sale of National Lottery tickets and instant scratch cards to be banned for children aged under-18, bringing them into line with the legal age for other types of gambling.

The youngsters in the survey also made 11 successful purchases of solvents from 17 attempts, the Devon report showed.

Cigarettes were bought seven times from 20 attempts, and videos six times from 26 attempts.

Bank cleared over debt recall

A couple who claimed their businesses were wrecked when Barclays Bank called in their £40,000 overdraft were left to pick up a bill for £350,000 yesterday after losing a court battle for compensation.

Nigel Green and Yvonne Challis started the legal battle when a replacement manager at their branch called in the debt. They claimed their riding school and haulage businesses were wrecked by the action.

A judge at the High Court in

Cardiff yesterday rejected their compensation claim - and ordered them to pay a total of £311,000 in overdraft, loans and interest. They were also told to pay the costs of the hearing estimated at £30,000.

The couple, both 42, who moved to Pencader, Dyfed, from Kent, said: "Our dreams are wrecked."

The court was told that manager Mervyn Jones - who was described as acting like a "fairy godmother" - loaned them

thousands of pounds to fund their business. But when he left the bank suffering from "severe stress" their ventures collapsed.

Their counsel told the court "the rug was pulled from beneath their feet" when new acting manager Hywel George called in their debts.

Judge Michael Gibbon ruled the bank was entitled to call in the overdraft. "They took the view that further funding of the business would be throwing good money after bad," he said.

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In the Fab Four's footsteps: The first students at Paul McCartney's Liverpool Institute for the Performing Arts join Gerry Marsden (centre) - who had a hit with *Ferry Cross the Mersey*. LIPA is based in the old high school attended by former Beatles McCartney and George Harrison. Photograph: Craig Easton

Rationing makes the NHS a lottery, warns Labour

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

Rationing is now "sweeping through the NHS" Harriet Harman, Labour's health spokeswoman, claimed yesterday as an independent survey showed that almost one-third of health authorities are now limiting, barring or considering reducing a range of services from treatments for glue ear to routine urine testing of pregnant women and radical treatment for disseminated cancers.

Her claim brought angry denials from Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health, who in a sharp Commons clash accused her of lying.

"Her evidence does not remotely justify the charges she is making," he said. Health authorities were consulting doctors on which treatments were good

value and latest clinical practice and ensuring the service reflected those developments.

If authorities were "ruling out" in every case treatments that doctors wanted to offer their patients, that would indeed be a subject of real concern. That is not what is happening.

Ms Harman backed her claim with evidence from a database of health authorities' purchasing intentions which shows that among the 40 health authorities some are considering excluding or reducing routine ultrasound in low-risk pregnancies and routine screening for brittle bone disease, aortic aneurysms and also colorectal cancer.

"This is the thin end of the wedge," she said. "Yesterday it was grommets, fertility treatment and sterilisation. Today it is varicose veins and osteoporosis screening. Tomorrow it will be hernias and hip replacements". Three health authorities - Bury and Rochdale, Worcester and District, and North and Mid Hampshire - were openly describing their decisions as rationing, she added.

"Ten have targeted varicose veins, 23 have targeted grommets, eight have targeted

osteoporosis screening, 21 have targeted D&C [dilation and curettage, or scraping of the lining of the womb] in women under 40, and eight have targeted fertility treatment".

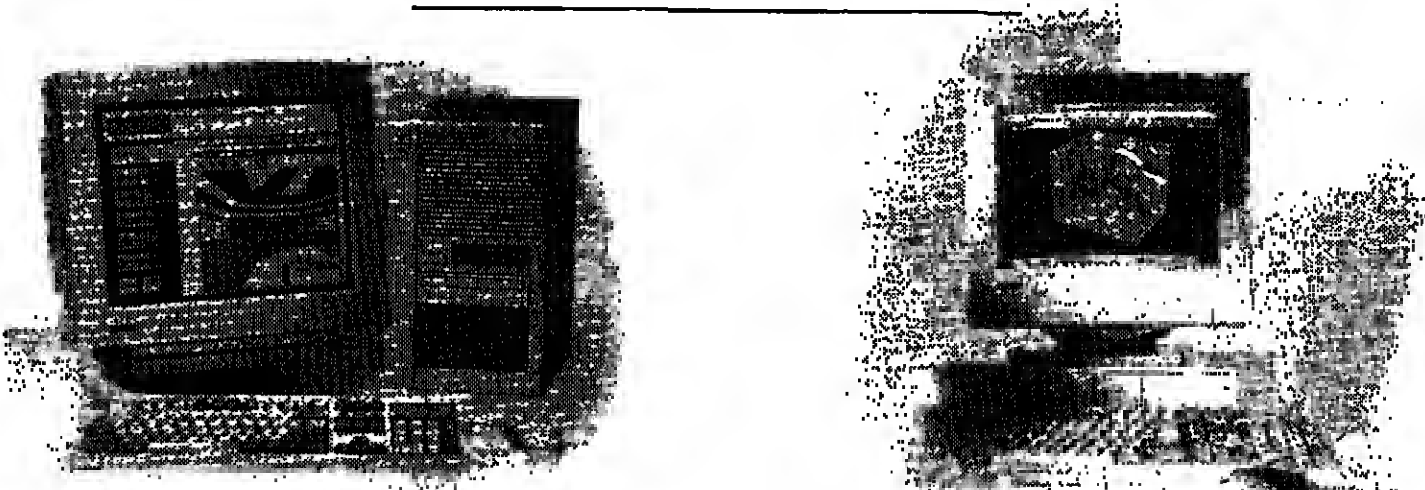
Health care had become "a lottery depending on where you live" and the Government's refusal to admit rationing was taking place was part of its drive towards NHS privatisation.

Alan Milburn, her front-bench colleague, said the data, from Blackwell Masters, an independent health consultancy which has analysed health authorities' plans, showed "disinvestment from screening for aortic aneurysm in North Birmingham, from ultrasounds for pregnant women in Powys and from cholesterol screening in Wigan and Bolton".

Rationing was not inevitable, he argued. The money was available but swallowed up by the extra £1bn cost of running the NHS internal market.

Ms Harman, however, refused to give a pledge that Labour would restore the services being reduced. Decisions on treatment should be made by doctors acting in patients' best interests, and she recognised that medical practice changed.

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Windows Magazine, November 1995

Treatment policy in 40 districts					
X = Health authorities restricting, barring or considering reductions in provision of treatments					
Key to treatments: A: Varicose veins; B: Grommets; C: Osteoporosis Screening; D: Dilation & Curettage for women under 40; E: Subfertility; F: Other					
	A	B	C	D	E
Barking and Havering					
Bedfordshire					
Berkshire					
Buckinghamshire					
County Durham					
Dorset					
East Dorset					
East Kent					
East Lancashire					
East Norfolk					
East Sussex					
Essex					
Herefordshire					
Hertfordshire					
Isle of Wight					
Kingston & Richmond					
Leicestershire					
Merton, Sutton & Wandsworth					
Mid Glamorgan					
Morecambe Bay					
Newcastle & North Tyneside					
North Birmingham					
North West Anglia					
North West Surrey					
Portsmouth & SE Hants					
Powys					
South Glamorgan					
South Staffordshire					
South West Surrey					
Tees					
Wakefield					
Walsall					
Warwickshire					
West Glamorgan					
West Kent					
West Sussex					
Wigan & Bolton					
Wiltshire & Bath					
Wolverhampton					
Worcester & District					
TOTAL 70	10	23	8	21	8

Source: The Blackwell Masters NHS Purchasing Intentions Database.

Opinions vary over value of treatments

Detailed examination of health authorities' purchasing plans shows huge variations in which procedures they plan to limit, how far they intend to do so, and by what methods.

Doctors said yesterday that the lack of effectiveness of many of the treatments, or their unproven nature, was leading anyway to a fall in how often they were performed.

Twenty-one authorities are reducing the numbers of D&C operations in women under 40. But Robert Winston, professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at the Royal Postgraduate Hospital, Hammersmith, said: "This is not a good one to crucify Stephen Dorrell on. For most women under 40 it is a waste of time, and if there was a strong indication that it really should be done, it would be done".

Only two authorities, South Staffordshire and Leicestershire, are refusing to purchase any such operations, with Leicestershire also refusing to pay for grommet insertions for glue ear - a procedure some doctors believe has been heavily overused. Others allow such operations in exceptional cases or specific circumstances.

North Birmingham is aiming to reduce expenditure on screening for aortic aneurysm, osteoporosis and colorectal cancer on the grounds that the effectiveness of such procedures "is proved to be of little benefit".

Gordon Blackwell, a partner in Blackwell Masters who produced the database, said very

Analysis

few health authorities routinely screened for such conditions. He admitted the benefit of such treatments was not known, but added: "The fact is that for a range of these services if you live in one district you will get them and if you cross the boundary to another you won't. The NHS is becoming a local service with national co-ordination".

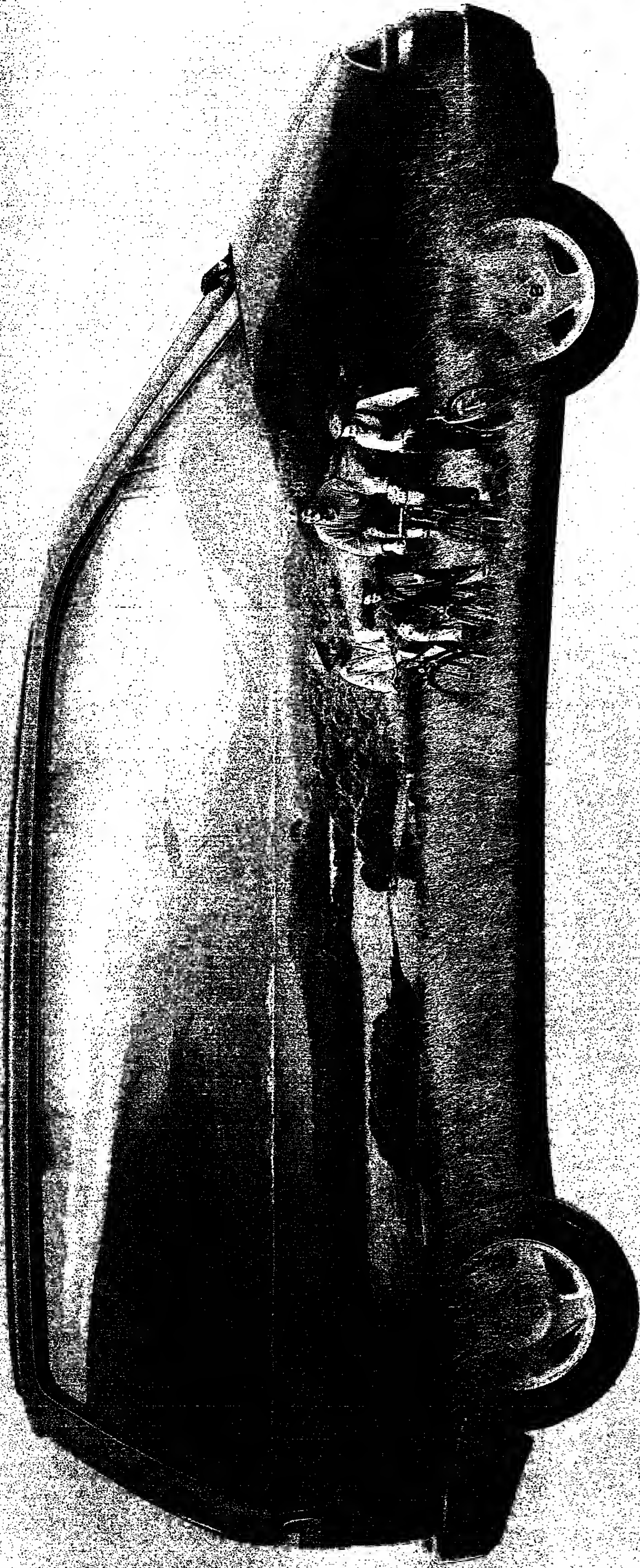
West Kent has excluded from its block contracts a wide range of treatments from bone marrow transplants, abortion, cochlear implants, sterilisation to the implantation of defibrillators. But it will consider them "on an individual basis".

Portsmouth and South Hampshire are considering reducing the amount of radical treatment of disseminated cancers as "there is little to be gained from this", and breast screening for women over the national age-target of 50. A spokesman for the NHS screening programme said that below the age of 50, women's breasts were too dense for cancers to be picked up.

Many of the exclusions cover cosmetic surgery, gender reassignment and infertility, though most of the 40 health authorities say they will consider them in exceptional cases.

Nicholas Timmins

501 من الاجل



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Mobile phones charge plan 'is outrageous'

MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

The Consumers' Association has attacked as "outrageous" plans to impose a monthly call charge limit on some mobile telephone customers or force them to pay a deposit.

The scheme - intended to combat fraud - is being introduced by Cellphones Direct, a mobile service provider, but industry sources say that other companies may follow suit.

Cellphones Direct has said that from next February new customers will be limited to £50 per month and must pay a deposit to have this extended.

Existing customers will also be constrained to £50, but can negotiate a higher limit with the company. In addition, international calls will be barred on all new phones unless customers reach some agreement with the company. This could involve leaving a substantial deposit to have the ban removed. Cellphones Direct said that the moves will help give customers "peace of mind" and that it is setting standards "which will become the industry norm".

The company, which deals mainly with customers connecting to the Vodafone network, said that the purpose is to protect it from giving unlimited credit and to protect

customers from theft or unauthorised use of their telephones. Illicit use of mobile telephones costs the industry an estimated £100m a year although Cellnet and Vodafone, the largest network operators, say they are making great strides in getting the problem under control.

A spokesman for the Consumers' Association attacked the proposal by Cellphones Direct.

Look who's talking

Estimated mobile telephone customers: 5 million.

Number using digital networks: 1 million

Calls made each day on mobile networks: about 20 million.

rect, saying: "This is just another example of an industry in a complete mess which is asking the customer to pay the price."

"It simply is up to the industry to provide a secure service for the people who use it and to provide a solid technical solution to the problem. People already pay through the nose for using mobile telephones."

Ofcom, the telecommunications watchdog, said that service providers, which are middlemen between the network operators

and the customers, are not licensed and so fall outside its sphere of influence. A spokeswoman said: "If that is the package they wish to offer then they are free to do so."

Roger Fry, managing director of Cellphones Direct, rejected the suggestion that he is asking the consumer to pick up an extra bill. He said that the company's average customers are not business users and spend between £10 and £15 per month on calls. The £50 limit was chosen both to protect and to give people as much flexibility as possible, he said.

The incidence of mobile telephone fraud may be reduced as more people transfer to new digital networks, which are much more secure than the old analogue systems. But while digital technology might stem "cloning" of mobile telephones, it cannot prevent people "hijacking" phones using other people's credit card numbers or names and addresses and simply not paying the bill.

Both Cellnet and Vodafone said that the industry clearly has a problem and that service providers have to do something to protect their interests. They said there are already safeguards in the networks which flag up unusually high spending on a given telephone or unexpected calling patterns.

Tradition under threat: Doorstep delivery men diversify in fight for survival



Home comforts: Midland Co-operative Dairies have extended their delivery service beyond the bounds of milk

Photograph: John Potter

Dear milkman: Two pints and a bottle of Beaujolais

HAZEL DUFFY

The residents of rural France could hardly believe their eyes this week as a traditional British milk float loaded with Beaujolais nouveau trundled its leisurely way northwards towards Calais en route for the heart of England.

The stunt was part of a ploy by Midland Co-op Dairies to publicise its latest attempt to keep doorstep milk deliveries in business.

From this week, the Co-op's 400,000 customers in the Midlands have been able to order from a monthly catalogue wine which their milkman delivers direct to the door.

In the summer, the milkmen were piling barbecue fodder on their floats. Now they will be bumping packs of wine up the garden path - three-bottle packs selling at

£11.99, with slightly more distinguished six-bottle packs selling at just under £30.

This is wine to the doorstep, however, not wine on the doorstep. There will not be any drunken blue tits imbibing wine through foil tops. All deliveries of alcohol have to be signed for by an adult.

The dairy had steeled itself for attacks from the teetotal brigade, on the grounds that doorstep deliveries were somehow more tempting than alcohol on the supermarket shelves. But they have not come.

The milkman will also deliver wine glasses, lasagne dishes, stilton cheese and Thai cookbooks, even tea-tree oil gel and aromatherapy packs, all the while keeping a traditional carling eye on the old people among his customers, taking note that the milk bottles have been safely taken in.

Service to the community as well as to the paying customer has long been a reason put forward by the industry in favour of milk deliveries in the face of wicked plots by Eurocrats in Brussels to deprive the British of their doorstep pinta.

In fact, the supermarket is the real enemy of the traditional milkman - selling milk in bulk-quantity cartons at a price the doorstep vendor cannot hope to match.

Catalogue "home shopping" is a desperate bid to stave off his demise, and there seems to be a glimmer of hope.

Peter Vaughan, marketing manager for Midland's Co-op Dairies, says that his doorstep milk sales this year have fallen by "between a third and a half" less the 5 per cent fall for the industry as a whole.

The 800 milkmen are the new entrepreneurs, their pay de-

termined within a "performance-related structure", or commission by any other name.

They have a hard sell ahead, competition in wines, and every other item on offer, is every bit as intense as for the humble pint of milk. Doorstep deliveries are being used by others to add edge in the competition.

Bass recently started a pilot scheme delivering beers to the door in Birmingham and Nottingham - so far, you have to be a Carling Black Label fan - but London gets a choice of eight premium beers. Discounts and promotions were built in from the beginning.

Brummies with long memories can afford to be smug. The local Davenport brewery, long since gone and its brand subsumed into Greenall Whitley, did doorstep deliveries of beer in the city. The cutting edge of service has come full circle.

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Fresh effort to privatise student loan scheme

FRAN ABRAMS
Education Correspondent

Banks and other financial institutions will be invited to bid to run a privatised student loan scheme under a government Bill published yesterday.

Ministers hope that in future the banks will take on costs of more than £1bn per year for students' living costs, but last night they were still sceptical about the idea.

The banks have said they will only take part in the new, two-tier system if it is commercially viable. They pulled out of the existing scheme before it started in 1990 because they said they would not make money out of it. Instead, the loans were funded by the Treasury and administered by a company set up for the purpose.

However, ministers now feel that the costs are growing too high and that some alternative must be found.

Figures released earlier this week showed that almost £1.3bn lent to students since 1990 remained unpaid.

Of 435,000 graduates with loans, only 304,000 were up to date with payments, while 44,000 were in arrears and 187,000 did not have to pay because they were earning less than 85 per cent of the average wage.

The proportion of students taking out loans has risen to 55 per cent from 28 per cent in 1990, and the average value of each loan has increased from £390 to £1,040. Handing responsibility over to the banks could remove up to £1bn from the public sector borrowing requirement from the next academic year.

Under the new legislation, both the Student Loan Company and up to four banks

would offer loans to students at interest rates pegged to inflation. The loan company payments would continue to be covered by the Treasury. The banks would receive a subsidy from the Secretary of State to reimburse them for the interest they would lose.

Bids will be invited from any financial institution which is interested, but it is thought that for the scheme to succeed, at least one of the "big four" high street banks would have to take part.

They have said that levels of outstanding debt would have to be cut if they were to volunteer. Otherwise, the prospect of winning extra business from students would be outweighed by the risk of substantial losses.

Announcing the Student Loans Bill, the higher education minister Eric Forth said students would benefit from the choice offered by the new system.

"The expertise and experience of the private sector would mean a better loans system overall and a better deal for students," he said.

The president of the National Union of Students, Jim Murphy, has written to all the banks warning them not to get involved.

The union fears the new loans will offer discounted terms for fast repayment to those who can afford it and will leave the rest to deal with the loans company.

Loans are very unpopular with students, who still believe the state should pay for their maintenance, and it is possible that a bank might lose business by taking part against their wishes.

"Students will view very dimly the activities of any banks that get involved in this scheme," Mr Murphy warned.



Arms and the woman: A Sten Mk III gun once owned by Winston Churchill, which fetched £9,000 at auction at Christie's in London yesterday. Churchill kept the gun, now deactivated, at Chartwell, his country home in Kent, during the Second World War. Photograph: John Voos

Videos firm to challenge censors

HELEN HAGUE

Film censorship in Britain is to be exposed to court scrutiny for the first time in its 70-year history.

Redemption Films, which specialises in horror and erotic videos, has been granted leave by Mr Justice Latham for a judicial review of procedures at both the British Board of Film Classification and the Video Appeals Committee.

The move follows a decision earlier this year to refuse classification to *Bare Behind Bars*, a film in the so-called "women in prison" genre, which Redemption had planned to release on video.

The court will be asked to rule that the clarification process adopted by the BBFC was unlawful when it refused to grant the film a video classification last September. Redemption then challenged the decision before the Video Appeals Committee. After a two-day hearing the ban was upheld.

Lawyers for Redemption Films will argue that the BBFC was neither fair nor consistent in its approach when classifying the video. They will also contend that James Ferman, the BBFC's director, was manifestly wrong in his application of the new Criminal Justice Act which deals with video classification.

This challenge will allow the court properly to consider for the first time the contentious parts of the Criminal Justice Act which deal with censorship. Redemption will also argue that it did not get a fair hearing from the Video Appeals Committee in June. It will be seeking a court order that the decision of both the censorship board and the appeals committee should be quashed.

Nigel Wingrove, who runs Redemption Films, said: "I'm hoping the judicial review will lead to a fundamental overhaul of the censorship process. *Bare Behind Bars* is a tongue-in-cheek sleaze epic which should not have been banned."

Drivers thought corpse was dummy

Motorists who passed a layby where the body of a building society manageress was dumped thought the corpse was a shop-window dummy left there as a joke, the "fake-rubbery" murder trial was told yesterday.

Malcolm Ward told Oxford Crown Court that he had been travelling along the A444 at Nuncaton, Warwickshire, at about 6.30am on 12 September last year. "I remember seeing a body-shaped object lying on the grass verge. I saw it in my headlights. I thought it could be

a dummy from a shop or a drunk just sleeping."

Gordon Wardell, 42, denies murdering his 39-year-old wife Carol, a Woolwich Building Society manageress, at the couple's home in the Warwickshire village of Meriden.

The prosecution has alleged that Mr Wardell suffocated his wife at home, dumped her body on the verge of the A444 at Nuncaton, where she worked, then used her keys and security code to break into the branch and take £14,000 to make it look as if robbers had killed her.

Police found Mr Wardell gagged, beaten and trussed up at his home.

He told them that a four-man gang had rendered him unconscious, and that one member of the gang, who had been wearing a clown mask, abducted his wife at knifepoint.

Another motorist, Stuart Garrett, told police: "I stopped in the layby and saw what appeared to be a dummy lying there. I could see the legs pointing towards the road and a bare midriff but couldn't see a face. I was thinking it was a dummy

and had been put there as a practical joke."

Two hours later, a third driver, Peter Beard, stopped and realised it was a human body. "I decided to kill a bit of time as I was driving along and stopped in the layby," he told the court.

"I saw what at first looked like a dummy then realised it was a human body. I thought it was a man because I couldn't see the features of the face."

Inspector Roger Price said in a statement that the body was fully clothed but had no shoes.

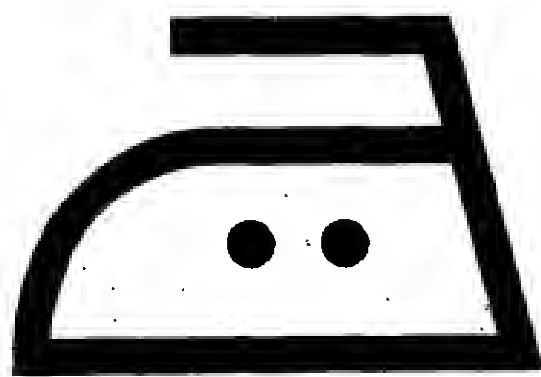
One sling-back sandal was found close by the left foot.

He was later called to the building society where Mrs Wardell had worked.

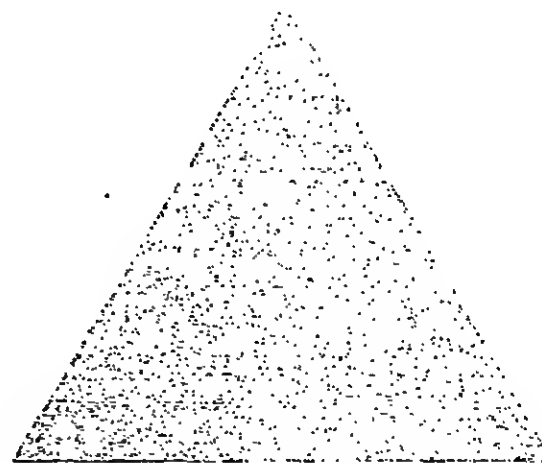
"I looked through the front window and could see a sandal lying in the centre of the customer area," he said.

"I could see it was the same style I had noticed at the scene. The sandal was for the right foot. I alerted colleagues that both incidents appeared to be connected."

The trial was adjourned until Monday.



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Bass

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12
international

Algerian elections: The President's supporters hail a victory for democracy, but the banned Islamists may yet wreak revenge

Zeroual celebrates victory over terror

ALGIERS
Robert Fisk

They thought the war was over. President Liamine Zeroual – tinier than one had remembered – smiling below his silver moustache among the beefy security men – had no sooner turned up in front of us to thank Algerians for his election victory than the shooting broke out. Plainclothes cops, blue-uniformed policemen, security agents, all heaved huge pistols from their belts and fired into the sky, sometimes only a few feet behind the presidential limousine. Not since independence can Algeria have witnessed so much gunfire.

"We have a democracy now," a policeman assured me, tugging a pistol from his holster. "We have won. It is over." But was this the way to celebrate peace, assuming President Zeroual's 60 per cent of the vote – or the election's officially pronounced 75 per cent turnout – meant peace was assured? The bullets skittered into the air, thousands of them, high over the sun-bathed city, their matchstick crackle mingled with the screams of motorists driving in convoys through the streets, Algerian flags streaming from the windows, jewelled ladies shouting their love for the little ex-general who had just told us democracy was theirs.

From time to time, amid the crowds, flags and gunfire, you could remember the facts: a cancelled parliamentary election in 1991, thousands of political prisoners, 50,000 dead, the throat-slashings, the headings,

street executions, car bombs and ambushes. And, travelling in a convoy driving from Didouche Mourad street up towards the Interior Ministry, I could not help but notice the less friendly, bearded faces of young men who watched our cars and the gun-happy cops with peculiar intensity. Was there not, one wondered at such moments, a price to be paid for all this?

You could not put that question to the authorities yesterday, as they smothered the notice boards with election results. The wilaya of Tipaza, they announced, had an 81.82 per cent turnout and Mr Zeroual had won 63.99 per cent of the vote, his nearest rival – the Hamas leader, Mahfoud Nahmah, only 23.49 per cent. In Djidjel, the turnout was 65.73, Mr Zeroual's share 58.83, Mr Nahmah's 27.3. Only in Tizi Ouzou, capital of the Berber country, did the Kabyle leader, Said Sadi, pick up 86.2 per cent of the local vote against Mr Zeroual's puny 8.78 per cent.

"How could you doubt the turnout in Algeria of 75 per cent?" a pollster asked, when I suggested I had not seen a million Algerians on the streets of the capital on Thursday.

But there was an election, Algerians did vote and, even if suspicious reporters allowed for a little tampering with the figures, it was difficult to believe Mr Zeroual had not won. Even the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), whose parliamentary election victory in 1991 led to the suspension of the poll and the banning of the party, claimed their own dubious elec-



All the President's men: Zeroual supporters waving flags in Algiers following the ex-general's triumph in the election

Photograph: Reuters

tion turnout statistic of 37 per cent was higher than they had expected. The people, the FIS said, had been intimidated by 400,000 soldiers and policemen. But unlike the armed "Islamists" who support the FIS, the security men had not threat-

ened to kill every voter who turned up at the polling stations. So you could see why the day-per ex-general was grinning from ear to ear yesterday morning as he hugged and kissed the tearful supporters around us. He had gambled and won, held

an election under the shadow of the knife and persuaded Algerians to vote in it, the turnout – even if you deduct a percentage or two – higher than the poll that would have given Algeria to the FIS three years ago.

The people had changed

their views; that was the message the government advertised yesterday. If they had given their vote to "Islamists" in the 1991-92 poll, they now gave it to Mr Zeroual, to "legitimacy", to "stability", to – and how important this word be-

comes each day in Algeria – "democracy". Amid the euphoria, few seemed to reflect on the future. If an election boycotted by the opposition and in which the FIS could not be represented is to be the key to turn back on the

motor of democracy, what does President Zeroual do next? Tell the West, of course, that he needs help, that a country with a new, proved democratic mandate deserves the economic and political (and military?) support of Europe and the United States. And tell his electoral opponents, Sheikh Nahmah of Hamas and Said Sadi and the Islamist intellectual Nurredine Bouchrou to join him and share power. But does he also try once more to talk to those with whom he was once prepared to negotiate, the FIS? And thus, by inference, to the regime's cruellest enemies, the armed "Islamists"?

Such thoughts did not occupy the minds of the thousands who flocked onto the streets of Algiers last night, dancing to the sound of gunfire, ululating through the traffic jams, celebrating that most illusory of all phenomena – the peace that comes without a ceasefire or a treaty. For, if the celebrations symbolised some form of national relief, they must also – to the unsmiling young men on the pavements – have seemed a provocation, something devoutly to be hated, something to which there must be a response. It was not a happy thought, that there might be a grim price to pay for all this.

"What do you think, Mr Robert?" asked one of the Interior Ministry men amid the gunfire. I smiled, but thought better of replying. When he repeated his question, I just looked at a cop firing a Kalashnikov into the sky. The man shrugged, then grinned. "This is our way, in Algeria," he said.

Italy turns on immigrants in election run-up

ANDREW GUMBLE
Rome

The Italian government was hating yesterday to avoid being derided by an acrimonious row over immigration, which has led to a flurry of racial insults and provocations exploited by various political parties as they jostle for position ahead of a much anticipated general election campaign.

At the insistence of the Northern League, volatile champion of northern Italy's in-



Dini: Capitulated to the Northern League

sular middle classes, the government spent most of the week drawing up an emergency decree establishing rules on the treatment of illegal immigrants, to ensure in turn that the Northern League would lend its support to the 1996 budget.

So explosive has the issue proved, however, that when the decree came before cabinet on Thursday it took all day to approve. The Prime Minister, Lamberto Dini, then took the unprecedented decision not to publish the decree's contents until it had been signed by the head of state, indicating that the argument could help precipitate the dissolution of parliament.

In less heated circumstances, the immigration issue would never have distracted Mr Dini and his non-political government from their main task: pushing the budget through parliament and establishing a few much-needed rules on the conduct of elections before handing in their resignation.

But the Northern League decided it wanted to make its voice heard before any election campaign, and insisted on a series of extreme anti-immigration measures to satisfy those of its

supporters who blame the growing numbers of foreigners in Italy for crime and unemployment.

First it threatened to withdraw support for the budget, then it made noises about walking out of the centre-left coalition dominated by the former communist PDS if the immigration issue was not addressed immediately. Both Mr Dini and the PDS leader, Massimo D'Alema, knew the League's votes were too precious to lose, so they capitulated.

Centrists have accused the Northern League of blackmail, and the Vatican denounced the arrogance and "police-state methods" of certain politicians.

The language of the debate has been immoderate. Ermanno Bosso, a Northern League senator, said immigrants should have their toe-prints taken by the police "because that's the only way to identify their tribal origin", and urged the use of rubber bullets to keep them in line.

He added that illegal immigrants should be flown home in military aircraft and dropped out with parachutes to save the expense of landing the planes. "Immigrants on civilian airlines might rape the hostesses", and airline captains would refuse to take them because they "slink", the senator went on.

Such sentiments had their effect. The far-right National Alliance, successor to the neo-Fascist party, cheered from the sidelines because Mr Bosso was echoing their call for the expulsion of all illegal immigrants.

The police, picking up on the political cue, launched raids to round up immigrants in the suburban tenements where many of the poorest live.

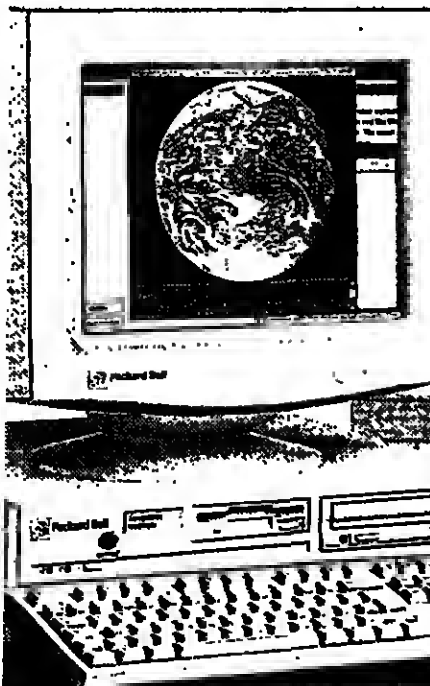
The PDS, which sells itself as a mainstream left-wing party, negotiated with the Northern League to moderate some of its more extreme proposals. On Tuesday the two parties presented a joint programme to make it easier to expel suspected criminals but also to enable working immigrants to regularise their situation and bring their families to Italy.

The government decree is believed to have taken a moderate line, but expulsions on their own are no answer since they will be hard to put into practice. In the meantime, the rhetoric of Mr Bosso is acquiring a frightening degree of respectability.

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international

Walesa rallies in presidential cliff-hanger



Kwasniewski: More articulate and educated than the President, but his communist past is a serious liability

Polish election: Solidarity locks horns with communism again

ADRIAN BRIDGE
Warsaw

Only two weeks ago, President Lech Walesa was being described by Poland's biggest-selling newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, as "unpredictable, irresponsible, unreformable and incompetent". Two weeks is a long time in Polish politics. As Poles prepare to vote in tomorrow's second and final round of the presidential election, the paper has changed its tune.

"Despite it all - Walesa," it said earlier this week in a piece aimed at the many voters still undecided or simply confused. It may not have been the most ringing editorial endorsement of all time but it was still a pretty spectacular U-turn. The reason is simple: while 13 candidates contested the first round two weeks ago, only two went through to the second-round run-off. And whereas many do not see Mr Walesa as the ideal head of state, they are even

more appalled at the prospect of victory for his rival, Aleksander Kwasniewski, leader of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and a former minister in the country's last truly Communist government.

As Jacek Kuron, third-placed candidate in the first round and the man originally backed by *Gazeta Wyborcza*, put it, the choice is between "bad and bad". But when pushed, he conceded he was "fonder of Lech than of Aleksander".

Opinion polls indicate that a slender majority thinks likewise but tomorrow's contest promises to be close. Mr Walesa, whose first term was marred by disputes with parliament and many former allies, is generally given leads of 2-3 percentage points but some polls point to a victory for his rival. A key factor could be turn-out: if too many do not vote, it could play into the hands of Mr Kwasniewski, whose supporters are better organised.

For many, it is a rerun of the battle between communism (and its successors), in the form of Mr Kwasniewski, and the Solidarity movement, once led by Mr Walesa, that toppled it.

Unlike the run-up to the first round, both sides have resorted to dirty tricks. Mr Kwasniewski has been dogged by allegations that his wife enriched herself in an insider-trading scandal and that in his declaration of outside interests as an MP he forgot to mention her big shareholdings.

For the Walesa team, the claims are indicative of underhand ways in which former communists have enriched themselves since formally losing power and are an example of the sort of practice their man is determined to stamp out.

But the President has been questioned about whether he paid tax on \$1m (£650,000) he received from Warner Brothers in 1989 for the rights to film his life. He has also been accused of using the secret services in his attempt to be re-elected.

Both men deny impropriety and it has been impossible to gauge which has been hit hardest by the allegations. The effect has been to deflect attention from serious discussion on policy differences.

Not that they are that pronounced. Despite their different pasts, both candidates share similar visions of Poland's future. In television debates this week, both said they wanted to continue economic reform and see the country firmly established as a member of the European Union and Nato.

Mr Kwasniewski, the better educated and more articulate, says he is best placed to mend divisions in society. While expressing respect for Mr Walesa's achievements as Solidarity leader, he likens the President to an ageing sportsman who keeps going on about a gold medal he won many years ago.

It is not the first time Mr Walesa has been consigned to the dustbin of history. And it will probably not be the last.



Walesa: Considered the best of a poor bunch but is a survivor who has been prematurely written off before

The savings of Lech Walesa

Whatever the outcome of tomorrow's election, he will have something striking to say. The electrician-turned-president may be a man of limited education, but he is rarely at a loss for words. Typical Walesa-speak combines colour, coarseness, and simplicity. It also often defies the laws of logic, grammar - and good taste. This is the kind of language that Poles have come to know, love - and frequently to ridicule.

"I am both for - and against." The quintessential Walesa quote, covering his stand on wide range of issues.

"I will build democracy - democratically, semi-democratically and even undemocratically." Pledge to the nation shortly after the toppling of communist rule in 1989.

"I won't do anything bad, and if I do, I will apologise." Taken from column in the satirical magazine *Nie*.

"The country needs political balance; the government is its left leg, the parliament is its right leg and I am in between." On being elected President in December 1990.

"I will tell you directly in a roundabout way."

"At a certain moment I had to descend from the trees and stop making faces ... I have simply begun to calculate, to be flexible and smart." On making the switch from trade union leader to politician.

"I will not bring the army or the police on to the streets. I will not shoot at Poles, even if only because I have the Nobel Peace Prize." - response to wave of strikes.

"I know adversaries who must be respected and friends who are worse than enemies." Interview last month.

"My critics say that I should speak better ... that I should read the things they write for me. But I have another principle, gentlemen, and that is to get things done." - Shortly after assuming office.

"The bed was so big that I couldn't find my wife in it", reference to being entertained by the Queen at Windsor Castle during state visit to Britain in 1991.

"My name is President." Freudian slip.

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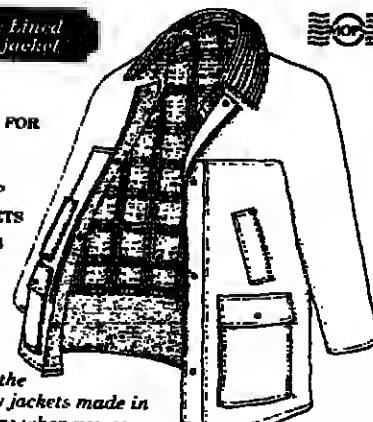


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Boxing's King could face a retrial

DAVID USBORNE
New York

Don King seemed at first to sag. Finally he rose from the defence table at which he had sat every working day for five weeks and joined his lawyer, Peter Fleming, in a long hug. From the courtroom he went first to the lavatory and then outside to a Lincoln limousine that carried him away to church.

You might have expected something different from Mr King, who is as famous for his bravura as for his electric-shock hairstyle. Minutes before, the jurors who had been weighing the US government's nine charges of insurance fraud against him were dismissed because they were hopelessly deadlocked.

A mistrial had been declared and Mr King was a free man. Free to confer with God and to return to being the world's most powerful — and most feared — promoter of professional boxing. Doubtless first on his agenda was the welfare of his choicest asset, "Iron Mike" Tyson, and the bout planned for March in Nevada between him and Frank Bruno.

But there were reasons for Mr King's uncharacteristic moderation. For one, he was surely exhausted by the last hours of the trial, which offered drama worthy of the Ali-Frazier "Thrilla in Manila" two decades ago. For another, he is not out of trouble yet. It is almost certain the government will seek a retrial in the new year.

He also faces a civil lawsuit from the Lloyd's of London syndicate whose insurance payout to him in 1992 was at the heart of the trial. Indicating that

a suit would be launched, the lawyer for the syndicate, Donald Cayea, said yesterday that it "believes it has enough evidence to meet the civil standard" successfully to recoup all its money, and perhaps more.

The allegation was that Mr King padded a claim that arose from the planned June 1991 fight between Julio Cesar Chavez, the current World Boxing Council super-lightweight champion, and Harold Goetz, injured his nose during training. According to the government, Mr King doctored his original contract with Chavez to include a fictitious loss of \$350,000 in "non-refundable training expenses" for Chavez.

During his own testimony a week ago, Mr King all but admitted Lloyd's had been duped, agreeing that the figure of \$350,000 had been "made up". But Mr Fleming contended that Mr King had nothing to do with filing the claim because he was too busy with other matters, including preparing to fight Tyson, which were to send the former heavyweight champion to jail for three years.

Anyone familiar with Mr King's reputation for sharp practice could easily find the charges against him believable. It was one of his former fighters, Tim Witherspoon, who once remarked that "Don's problem is that he would rather put a dishonest quarter into his pocket than an honest dollar".

As they left court yesterday, however, several jurors said the government had failed to prove that even if a crime had been committed that it was Mr



Boxing clever: Don King leaving court in New York yesterday after a mistrial was declared in his insurance-fraud case

Photograph: AP

King who was the guilty party.

Some may also have shared the belief of the defence, though it was never expressed formally in court, that Don King had been brought to trial only because he was Don King.

In 1985 the government tried and failed to convict him of tax evasion. Its appetite for the hide of Mr King, who in 1967 was jailed for manslaughter for beating a man to death — he served four years — has not been

quenched since. The closing hours of the trial were a bitter experience for the prosecutors. After receiving a note from jurors signalling their difficulties, Judge Lawrence McKenna surprised everyone by declining

to take the normal route of admonishing them to try harder, deciding instead to dismiss them. In a last-ditch gambit, the prosecution went to an appeals court, asking that Judge McKenna be forced to keep de-

liberations going. The manoeuvre spawned headlines about "King Trial Chaos". But yesterday morning the prosecution gave up the fight and conceded defeat. Until the next round, that is.

Indians locate sick hostages

TIM MCGIRK
New Delhi

More than four months ago, two Britons, a German and an American set off with their wives and girlfriends for a short holiday in the Kashmir Himalayas.

Their holiday turned into a horror. Kidnapped by Islamic gunmen, the men were dragged over icy passes and threatened with death. The captors, Al-Faraz guerrillas, have shown they are not bluffing: a fifth hostage, a Norwegian, had his head chopped off.

The surviving hostages are in bad shape. The American, Donald Hutchings, may have lost both his feet to frostbite. One Briton, Keith Mangan, 33, from London, is said to be suffering from exposure and injuries after a fall. This week Al-Faraz warned Indian officials that the second Briton, Paul Wells, 23, a Nottingham student, was also ill.

Efforts to secure their release through negotiation, according to the officials, may be "gathering momentum". But the Indians' optimism has been misplaced before. Al-Faraz cut off all communication with Indian negotiators in Srinagar two months ago and only renewed contact several days ago.

Al-Faraz — one of many Muslim guerrilla groups leading a five-year revolt against Indian rule in Kashmir — are demanding that India release up to 10 Kashmir militants, but India is refusing to let any of these "terrorists" go.

The guerrillas are thought to have gathered an extra 50 gunmen. Indian officials say that during the communication gap, British, US and German diplomats were able to open "parallel lines" to Al-Faraz to plead for the hostages' release.

The officials, who know the hostages are being kept in villages near Anantnag, about 60 miles from Srinagar, say the guerrillas realise that no more political advantage can be gained by holding the four.

The hostages are so well-guarded that any rescue attempt, officials said, would seal their death. And the kidnappers' proximity to a town is seen as a sign that they want to keep the captives alive.

US medic who would not wear the blue beret goes on trial

IMRE KARACS
Bonn

An American soldier went on trial yesterday at a US army base in Germany for refusing to wear the UN blue beret, an offence which has rekindled debate at home about the country's global role.

Specialist Michael New, 22, an army medic, is accused of "refusing a legal order" but the defence and their conservative allies argue that it is US participation in peace-keeping missions that should be in the dock.

His gesture, the first of its kind in the US army, has become a cause célèbre, rallying patriotic right-wingers against President Bill Clinton's policy in former Yugoslavia.

Mr New refused to don the blue headgear and epaulettes on 10 October when his unit in southern Germany was ordered to join a UN peace-keeping mission in Macedonia.

He argued that as he had sworn an oath of allegiance to the US, wearing another uniform would be disloyal.

"It is not that he didn't want to go to war with his unit,"

Colonel Henry Hamilton, who heads Mr New's four-strong team of lawyers, told the military newspaper *Stars and Stripes*. "The issue is, is he going to go as an army soldier or as a minion of the UN?"

His "heroic" deed captured the imagination of the American right. In Texas, Mr New's home state, citizens staged demonstrations in support of the medic. "Let's stop talking about Michael New as some selfish kid who didn't have the guts to go," said Mark Gilman, a Houston talk-show host who addressed the rally in Conroe,

the soldier's home town. "Michael New is a hero."

The tide of protest rapidly swept into Washington. Last month 43 Congressmen signed a letter to Mr Clinton demanding "a full legal and constitutional analysis of the justification of your orders placing members of the United States Armed Forces under the command of foreign United Nations officers".

Senior Republican Congressmen have also introduced legislation to prohibit a president from ordering US troops to wear UN insignia.

"A soldier's oath is to the US Constitution, not to the UN Charter," said Tom DeLay, who tabled the motion.

"Forcing soldiers to wear the uniform of the United Nations effectively asks the soldier to serve another power. No American soldier should be put in Michael New's position — forced to choose allegiances between the United States and the United Nations."

In the murky world of peace-keeping, with its deliberately fudged chain of command, such an interpretation would virtually exclude the US from a fu-

ture role. With Washington poised to send thousands of troops into the former Yugoslavia, the proposed legislation could deal US diplomacy a devastating blow.

That did not appear to worry Mr New, who stood impassively during yesterday's arraignment proceedings near the southern German city of Würzburg.

He did not enter a plea, and there will be a second hearing to set the date of the court-martial, expected to be held in January. The defence is relishing the prospect of taking on the

might of the US military machine. Mr New's lawyers have already sprung one surprise on the prosecution, calling General John Shalikashvili, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, to the witness-box.

The medic, who was described by his commanding officer as a good soldier, does not have much to fear from the trial's outcome.

"We're not going to hang him, or anything like that," said a US army source. His most likely punishment is dishonourable discharge, and a hero's welcome back home in Texas.

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Saro-wiwa hanging
Killing
divided

IN BRIEF

Education day set for...

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Saro-wiwa hanging: Civilian outrage at the executions of Ogoni activists has left the military regime isolated but unrepentant

Killings reveal divided Nigeria

BATURE THOMPSON
Lagos

An air force flight-lieutenant was out shopping with his wife in Ikeja, a suburb of Lagos, when he got into a discussion with other shoppers about the hanging of Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa, the writer and Ogoni minority-rights activist. The officer saw nothing wrong with the execution, nor was he impressed by the international outcry it had generated.

The other shoppers engaged him in a shouting match. He decided to leave for home but was trailed by men who sprang on him and forced him into the boot of a car, leaving his wife stranded. He was dumped the next morning a few yards from his home, bleeding profusely and in severe shock.

The hanging of Saro-Wiwa has dramatised the most obvious division in Nigeria today - which is not tribal, religious or regional, but a split between those in uniform and those who are not.

The alienation of the military from the civilian population entered an acute phase in June 1993 when General Ibrahim Babangida annulled an election viewed as the freest and fairest in Nigeria's history. It grew worse with the rise to power of General Sani Abacha on 17 November 1993, ostensibly to save the nation from disintegration, in fact to resolve an unnecessary crisis engineered by Nigeria's power-hungry generals.

But the killing of Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists, after appeals from home and abroad for clemency, has split the ruling military circle itself. Some senior officers said the uproar over the hanging showed the government cannot act indefinitely in contravention to the norms of civilised societies. They said it was a clear sign the military ought not to remain in government much longer.

For the moment, these voices are drowned by a chorus of chubby-cheeked soldiers drawn by the power and perquisites of a government accountable only to itself. Most such officers do not accept a problem exists in Nigeria and can little about the application of justice and mercy towards those, like Saro-

Wiwa, who are perceived as enemies of the state.

Not all members of the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) went along with the decision to hurry Saro-Wiwa and the others to their deaths. A few argued against the sentences on the grounds that the Ogonis already owned feelings of persecution and the international community would be offended. They said the country could not afford more bloodshed. But, they were outnumbered by hawkish members of the council.

A similar plea in the case of the former head of state, Olusegun Obasanjo, and 40 others accused of plotting the overthrow of the Abacha regime, was upheld. As in Saro-Wiwa's case, there was a campaign for clemency from the international community.

That gesture, according to government officials, was partly responsible for the regime's transience this time around. The government did not wish to be categorised as weak and not in control. There had been a groundswell of opinion among junior officers who believed Obasanjo and other alleged coup-plotters should have been shot. They were still smarting from their rebuff when the Saro-Wiwa trial came along. A majority of the PRC felt it must take a hard line this time, or alienate the middle ranks of the military.

But the virulence and speed of the international community's reaction shocked the regime. While some officials issued threats against the Commonwealth for suspending Nigeria, and against the West for withdrawing its envoys, General Abacha's spokesman issued a mild statement that expressed only sadness, and which said the government would announce its position in due course. The statement, acknowledged as the regime's authentic position, confirmed official hints that the government had been sobered by the worldwide backlash.

The government's worries have been compounded by the fact that it has inadvertently reunited Nigeria's disorganised opposition. It has also widened the gap between the majority tribes in the country and the

minority groups which produce most of Nigeria's oil.

"When the coup plotters, who came from the majority tribes, were convicted, pleas for their sentences to be commuted were promptly heeded," a minority rights activist said. "But now they have damned everyone and hanged minority-rights campaigners. Who says this nation is one?"

Although the government is in a state of shock, it is looking for escape routes. One is expected to be an announcement of the start of the transition to civilian rule, which General Abacha announced on 1 October. Since then nothing has been done and few people believe it will come to anything.

If they are wrong, credit will go in part to Saro-Wiwa. In death he has put the regime under greater pressure than at any other time in its history.

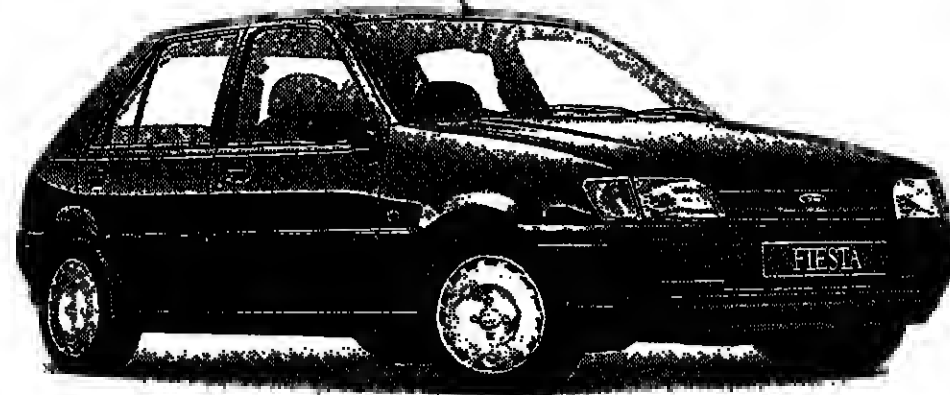
Bature Thompson is the pseudonym of a senior Nigerian journalist.



Outrage: Archbishop Desmond Tutu hands in a letter to the Nigerian embassy in Johannesburg protesting against the executions

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IN BRIEF

Extradition day set for Priebe

Buenos Aires — Erich Priebe, who faces charges of participating in a Second World War massacre in Italy, will be extradited to Rome on Monday. The 82-year-old former SS captain has admitted participating in the 1944 massacre of 335 civilians in the Ardeatine Caves outside Rome, a reprisal for the deaths of 32 German soldiers in an ambush. AP

Nuclear test vote upsets Chirac

Paris — France cancelled a summit with Italy in a fit of pique after Rome joined most European Union nations in a UN vote deploring French and Chinese nuclear weapons testing. President Jacques Chirac had been due to meet the Italian Prime Minister, Lamberto Dini, in Naples next weekend. Reuters

Greek inmates lynch foreign prisoner

Athens — Inmates lynched and burned a foreign convict as the Greek authorities failed to regain control of the nation's largest prison for a third day. The unidentified convict was the fourth to die since prisoners armed with knives and clubs took control of Korydallos prison on Tuesday night. AP

Flags for royal couple

Copenhagen — Thousands of flag-waving Danes braved driving snow to catch a glimpse of Prince Joachim and Alexandra Manley, a Hong Kong-based economist who has a British father, Austrian mother and a Chinese grandmother, as they paraded through the Danish capital before their wedding today. It is Denmark's first royal wedding since Joachim's mother, Queen Margrethe, married a French count, Henri de Laborde de Monpezat, in 1967. Reuters



Israelis to pull out of Bethlehem early

Jerusalem — Israeli soldiers will leave the town of Bethlehem on 18 December, three days earlier than planned, to allow preparations for the first Christmas under Arab control in 28 years, Palestinian officials said. Israel is redeploying troops from six West Bank towns and part of Hebron under an agreement signed with the Palestine Liberation Organisation in September to extend Palestinian self-rule from Gaza and Jericho. Reuters

Dole tipped to win test of strength

Orlando — The Senate Majority Leader, Bob Dole, is favoured to win a Republican presidential "straw poll" in Florida this week-end, an important test of strength and organisation in the 1996 campaign. Mr Dole, who leads the other nine Republican candidates by a wide margin, delayed plans to go to Florida yesterday because of the budget crisis in Washington. Reuters

Rushdie locked up in Chile

Santiago — Security-conscious Chilean authorities kept the British writer Salman Rushdie locked up in a Santiago apartment yesterday after cancelling his sole scheduled public appearance at a book fair in the city. "He has had no chance to speak with the news media or with the Chilean people," said his local publisher, Olaf Hantel. Reuters

Earthling lapse costs cosmonauts' votes

Moscow — Two cosmonauts orbiting the earth until next February aboard the Mir space station will not take part in Russia's next election next month because earthlings forgot to send them any ballot papers on the last Russian supply rocket to the Space Shuttle Atlantis. Reuters

obituaries / gazette

Gwyn A. Williams

The Welsh historian Gwyn A. Williams saw himself as "a people's remembrancer", by which he meant that he chose as his professional role the elucidation and celebration of the Radicalism which he took to be the essence of the Welsh political tradition.

He was unusual among academic historians in that, although meticulous in his scholarship and widely read in the history of Marxism in Europe, he was able to infuse his writing with a passionate concern about the fate of his own people and to demonstrate, often in a most vivid manner, that Wales - particularly South Wales - was the very avil on which the progress of the urban working class had first been hammered out.

But he was not content with scholarly exegesis that was not backed up by political engagement. He tried to influence public opinion by presenting the history of Wales in new, sometimes startlingly dramatic ways, whether in his lectures and books or in the many television programmes he made, in both Welsh and English, during the latter part of his career. In all his work the call to action was explicit and unequivocal: the capitalist, centralist, British State and the English hegemony had to be undone if the national community of Wales was to survive and prosper.

Although he began, during the heady days of the civil war in Spain, as a Young Communist, and remained an unrepentant Socialist for the rest of his life, Gwyn Aif (as he was known, to distinguish him from several other eminent Welshmen with similar names) was for many years an uneasy member of the Labour Party but eventually found his political home on the left wing of Plaid Cymru. For a while he was a leading member of the editorial board of the magazine *Radical Wales*, and served on the party's Executive Committee. He was, however, never persuaded to stand as a Plaid Cymru candidate, although his oratory (in which he used a slight stammer to excellent effect) made him one of the most effective and

popular public speakers in Wales.

Born in the iron town of Dowlais, on the hill above Merthyr Tydfil, the cradle of the Industrial Revolution in Wales, Williams read History at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and was appointed Lecturer in Welsh History there in 1954. He was such an entertaining speaker that students from other departments, myself among them, regularly sat in on his lectures, for the sheer excitement of hearing what he had to say about the industrial Wales in which he had grown up, after which we adjourned to the nearest pub, where he would continue to hold forth with the most brilliant dialectic that any of us had encountered.

Williams left Aberystwyth to take up a Readership at York and from 1965 to 1974 he held the Chair of History at that university. His doctoral thesis had been published as *Medieval London: from commune to capital*, in 1963, and was followed five years later by *Artisans and Sans-Culottes*, about popular movements in France and Britain during the French Revolution. His European perspective was grounded in these early works and others: *Proletarian Order* (1975), a study of Antonio Gramsci and the history of Communism in Italy, and *Goya and the Impossible Revolution* (1978), as part of the research for which he learnt Italian and Spanish respectively. His wife, Maria, belonged to the community of steelworkers from northern Spain who were long established in Dowlais.

But it was with his books on specifically Welsh subjects that Williams made most impact as an historian. Returning to Wales in 1974 as Professor of History at University College, Cardiff, he set about re-interpreting key episodes in Welsh history. His *The Merthyr Rising* (1978) was the first full account of the workers' revolt of 1831 and the execution of Dic Penderyn, one of the earliest martyrs of the Welsh working class.

In *Madoc: the making of a myth* (1979) he examined the evidence for the discovery of America by Prince Madog ab

Owain Gwynedd in about 1170 and, in particular, for the existence of a tribe of Indians, known as Mandans, who were said to be his descendants. It was the Welshman John Dee, the magus of his age, who had first claimed the New World for the Queen of England on the basis of this persistent yarn, which was developed by Robert Southey in his long poem *Madoc* in 1805. Williams debunked the myth as an imperialist fiction, but showed how it had fired the imagination of Welsh Radicals for centuries thereafter and was comparable, in its patriotic potency, with the English myth of the free-born Saxon living under the Norman yoke. He returned to these themes and introduced others in *The Welsh in their History* (1982), a collection of essays which argues for the opening up of new discourses, and in *When was Wales?* (1985), perhaps his most influential work. The latter was written while he was making the television series *The Dragon has Two Tongues*, in which he appeared in bruising confrontation with the rather more cautious Wynford Vaughan-Thomas; the question of who won this verbal punch-up, and on how many points, is still hotly debated in Wales and one by which the sheep and the goats can be separated.

The book concludes with some typically trenchant observations, not unaffected by the stress of Thatcherism: "The Welsh as a people have lived by making and remaking themselves in generation after generation, usually against the odds, usually within a British context. Wales is an artefact which the Welsh produce. If they want to, it requires an act of choice. To-day, it looks as though that choice will be more difficult than ever before. There are roads out towards survival as a people, but they are long and hard and demand sacrifice and at present unthinkable to most of the Welsh... Some kind of human society, though God knows what kind, will no doubt go on occupying these two western peninsulas of Britain, but that people, who are my people and no mean people, who have for a millennium and a half lived in them as a Welsh people, are now nothing but a naked people under an acid rain."

In 1983 Williams took early retirement from his Chair at Cardiff (he was fond of de-



Gwyn Aif: 'The Welsh are now nothing but a naked people under an acid rain' Photograph: Western Mail

scribing himself as "a redundant historian") and began making films with Telys, one of the independent companies on which the reputation of Welsh broadcasting now largely depends. He moved from Cardiff to the village of Drefach Felindre, in Dyfed, where he shared a home with Sian Lloyd. Among the people about whom he made films were James Gillray, Sylvia Pankhurst, Pushkin, Mary Shelley, and the Welsh writers Saunders Lewis, T.E. Nicholas and Iolo Morganwg.

His last book, *Excalibur: the search for Arthur* (1994), was a clear-eyed account of a subject which has confused so many lesser historians, and his last film, *Gwyn Aif - a People's Remembrancer* (1995) a moving auto-

biography of a man who chose the hard road to an understanding of his life and times.

The image of Gwyn Williams which remains in the memory contains his pugnacious but engaging manner and the impish wit with which he expounded his theses about Wales and the Welsh. A small man, with a shock of white hair and the Iberian features that seem so typical of the valleys of south-east Wales, he developed a quirky but compulsive television style that had all the immediacy and eloquence of his writing, using the medium unapologetically to put over what he thought the Welsh people needed to know about their own past.

But I am pretty sure that it is his books that he will be

remembered. For many of my generation, who were undergraduates in the late Fifties and early Sixties, and who participated with him in the political campaigns of the Seventies and Eighties, he shares a place with that other great Welsh Socialist, Raymond Williams, as an important influence on the way we now think about our country and people.

Meie Stephens

Gwyn Aif Williams, historian: born Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil 30 September 1925; Professor of History, York University 1965-73; Professor of History, University College, Cardiff 1974-83; married 1950 Maria Fernandez (one son); died Drefach Felindre, Dyfed 16 November 1995.

Mary Waldegrave

No one who met Mary Waldegrave at any stage of her life would doubt being in the presence of an unusual character. The looks, the limp, the enchanting smile and the ready laughter were striking and rare.

She was born on Christmas Day 1909, the eldest of four daughters of Lt-Col Arthur Grenfell by his second wife, Hil-da, daughter of General Sir Neville Lytton. She competed easily with the demands of a beautiful mother and of her three sisters, Mrs Patrick Lort-Phillips, Dame Frances Campbell-Preston, and the late Lady Ballantrae. The limp she owed to an attack of poliomyelitis in her teens. She never allowed it to handicap her, though it gave her considerable pain in her last years.

In 1928 she won a history scholarship to Somerville College, Oxford, from St Paul's Girls' School, but disappointed her tutors by cutting short her academic career in order to marry Geoffrey Waldegrave in 1930, six years before he inherited the title of Earl Waldegrave. She gave him five daughters, and in the Second World War, when their house in Somerset was requisitioned for troops, made the difficult decision to take them to Canada. Then she added a son to their family, James, the present Earl, in 1940 and after their return to England, in 1946, a second son, William, the Tory minister. She was happy to end her exile before the war ended, and to return to Chesham, not without ignorant opposition from those who took a different view of what patriotic duty required of a mother of young children in wartime emergency.

The rest of her life was spent at Chesham, the centre of a rich family life and the support of many good causes. But she found time to put her strong intellect and historical training to producing from the Waldegrave archives a history of the family which has unfortunately not found a publisher. The successes of her husband and family could not spoil Mary; she remained serene and

delightful, the confidante, comfort and inspiration of all who came to her. She retained to the end her inimitable sense of humour and her strong Christian faith.

John Stephenson

Mary Waldegrave, historian: born Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil 30 September 1909; married 1930 Geoffrey Waldegrave (succeeded 1936 as 12th Earl Waldegrave, died 1993; two sons, five daughters); died Chesham, Mendips, Somerset 13 November 1995.



Waldegrave: Walpoliana

When Wilmot Sheldon Lewis, the great Horace Walpole collector, went British country house visiting, his aims were utterly ruthless, writes James Fergusson. He was going, by a playful variety of New England charm, outright cheek and air-mail bombardment, to cajole the "private owner" (he said to crack) to part with every item possible connected with his favourite 18th-century author. The Waldegraves at Chesham were an obvious target, and it is to

John Stephenson

Jacob Rader Marcus, historian: born Cornhill, Pennsylvania 5 March 1896; assistant professor of Jewish History, Hebrew Union College 1926-29, associate professor 1929-34, professor of Jewish History 1934-59, Adolph S. Ochs Professor of American Jewish History 1959-63, Milton and Harriet Kutz Distinguished Service Professor of American Jewish History 1963-95; married 1925 Antonette Brody (died 1953; one daughter deceased); died Cincinnati 14 November 1995.

Rabbi Jacob Rader Marcus

Jacob Rader Marcus was the outstanding historian of American Jewish history for most of this century. A week ago, I received a letter from him intended to raise funds for the American Jewish Archives, which he founded in 1947. In his typical, lively and politically incorrect style, it commenced:

People do ask me how I account for my longevity, such as it is. The secret is that I never smoked, drank or ran around with girls until I was 12 years of age. I am kind to women, children, worms. I speak of God in the highest terms. In other words, I am an Anglo-Saxon Hebrew, a Reform Jew who believes in the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the neighbourhood of Cincinnati. I learned to discipline myself. The only fiction I read was my own historical novels. I am alert and find it easy to remember many things that never happened.

He was unjust to himself in that appraisal. There was no other historian in the United States who paid as much at-



Marcus: Kind to worms

tention to the minutiae found in the correspondence, archives, and other records of Jewish organisations and institutions. Marcus went to the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati as a 15-year-old student in 1911, and started publishing his work in 1916. After his military service, and a Berlin PhD (*magna cum laude*) on the trade patterns between England and Germany, he began teaching at the Hebrew Union College in 1920, and continued to teach there until last week. The first phase of his work saw him examine European history with rare perception, and *The Jew in the Medieval World* (1938) and *Communal Life in the German Ghetto* (1947) are still valuable texts. An earlier book on German Jewish history, *The Rise and Decline of the German Jew* (1934), was flawed by his expressed hope that Hitler would be a passing phenomenon, but gave a sound account of the development of German Jewry.

Once Marcus became Jew-centred on the American Jewish scene, he created a unique body of work which made the American Jewish Archives the true centre of American Jewish historiography. In 1956, he established the American Jew-

ish Periodical Center, vital to American Jewish research. His three-volume collection *Memoirs of American Jews: 1775-1965* (1955), his *American Jewish documents, 18th century* (1958) and his four-volume *United States Jewry 1776-1985* (1989-93) are evidence of a questing mind and an enormous capacity for work.

Jacob Rader Marcus was a gregarious, fun-loving rabbi and teacher. As President of the CCAR (Central Conference of American Rabbis) from 1949 he would wander around the Conference and inquire among the rabbis, "Where are you located now?" Then he might place his hand on the rabbi's shoulder and tell him, "I got you that job, my boy!" Quite often, it was true.

He was a great politician, and gave practical advice to the graduates of the college, who looked upon him as a father figure. His favourite student, Bertram Korn (the historian of

Jewish life in the American Civil War), once wrote of him. Words like "warmth", "geniality", "honour", "dignity", remain words and cannot convey the experience of being with the man, sharing his thoughts, knowing his idealism, receiving his help, and learning... not only of Jewish history, but also of the human situation and the role of man in God's world.

Marcus was the typical American Jew he chronicled. Born in Pennsylvania, he found his first private school in the Carnegie Library in the town of Homestead, and his Orthodox Hebrew school across the Monongahela river in Pittsburgh. Aspects of traditionalism remained part of his life, as the history teacher of the Reform rabbinite. It is intriguing that his first task at the Hebrew Union College was as instructor in Bible and Rabbinics. The roots of his tradition helped him to define the American Jew within all of the cultural influences

of that environment, even when he felt that the Jew "is a cultural entity, has always been one, and will always remain one... not completely subject to his general environment". That, too, describes Jacob Rader Marcus, who was a unique teacher and a great human soul.

Albert H. Friedlander

Jacob Rader Marcus, historian: born Cornhill, Pennsylvania 5 March 1896; assistant professor of Jewish History, Hebrew Union College 1926-29, associate professor 1929-34, professor of Jewish History 1934-59, Adolph S. Ochs Professor of American Jewish History 1959-63, Milton and Harriet Kutz Distinguished Service Professor of American Jewish History 1963-95; married 1925 Antonette Brody (died 1953; one daughter deceased); died Cincinnati 14 November 1995.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

CAWTE: To Christopher and Lindsay (née Rodgers), a beautiful daughter, Elena Rose, on 20 October.

DEATHS

LEE-BARRER: Rear-Admiral John Lee-Barrer CB DSO (died 1991). Respectfully in Hampshire, on 14 November 1995, aged 90, beloved father of Victoria and Sarah. Private cremation. Memorial service at St Mary the Virgin Church, Wymouth, Essex, on Monday 15 January 1996 at 2pm.

MALLINSON: Sir William. On Friday 17 November 1995, at the Royal Hospital, Portney, aged 53 years. Much-loved father of James and Kate. Funeral service at Holy Trinity Church, Bournemouth, Isle of Wight, on Thursday 23 November 1995 at 2.30pm. Family flowers only but donations if desired to the RNLI. Memorial service in London at a later date.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 0171-293 2011 or fax 0171-293 2010.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

1995: The Duchess of Kent, Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, the Princess of Wales, the Duchess of Cornwall, the Duchess of Devonshire, the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Kent, the Duchess of Norfolk, the Duchess of Northumberland, the Duchess of Portland, the Duchess of Rutland, the Duchess of Somerset, the Duchess of Suffolk, the Duchess of Westmoreland, the Duchess of York, the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Kent, the Duchess of Norfolk, the Duchess of Northumberland, the Duchess of Portland, the Duchess of Rutland, the Duchess of Somerset, the Duchess of Suffolk, the Duchess of Westmoreland, the Duchess of York, the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Kent, the Duchess of Norfolk, the Duchess of Northumberland, the Duchess of Portland, the Duchess of Rutland, the Duchess of Somerset, the Duchess of Suffolk, the Duchess of Westmoreland, the Duchess of York, the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Kent, the Duchess of Norfolk, the Duchess of Northumberland, the 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saturday story

Reshaping the Union, the McMajor way

The reputation of British politics has fallen so low that any hint of honesty from one of its leading practitioners should be as welcome as a modest display of ball control from an English footballer. So John Major's unexpected attempt to repack himself as a constitutional reformer, albeit a cautious one, should be encouraged.

In his interview with the *Independent* published yesterday, the Prime Minister made three important acknowledgments about the state of the nation. Taken together, these admissions could open up a new front in politics over the future of the Union, devolution and Home Rule for Scotland. They also mark a further stage in Mr Major's attempt to pick himself up from the canvas, raise his guard and start slugging it out with Tony Blair.

The first significant admission was over Scotland's viability as a separate state. Speaking in tones normally employed to describe distant lands, Mr Major sounded as if he had discovered an interesting new fact: "There are five million Scots," he told us. "Nobody should be in any doubt that Scotland could be a separate nation; it was perfectly credible, he warned."

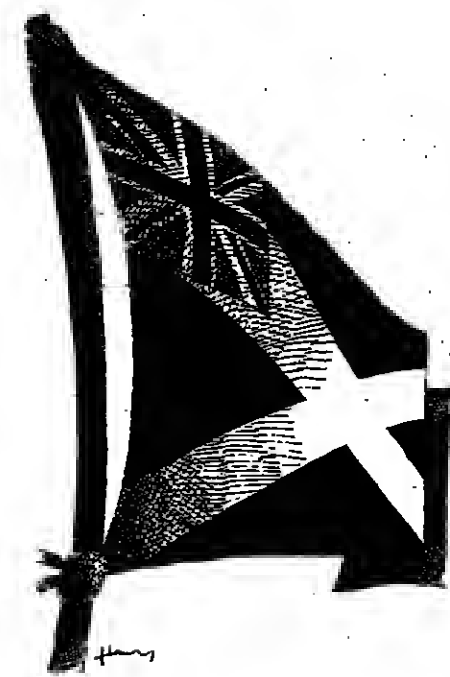
That was followed by a strikingly frank assessment of the potency of the separatist current in Scottish politics. It suits Mr Major tactically to play up the scale of the threat that Scottish Nationalists might pose to the Union, but he is surely right that in the long run, separatists could claim a mandate to take Scotland out of the Union.

For Mr Major, the corollary of these two propositions is that one needs to take a long-term view of the future of Scottish governance

rather than simply appeasing the nationalists, which is what he accuses Labour of doing. That means keeping the Union together by loosening its ties but retaining the primacy of Westminster. The separatist urges in Scottish politics will only be calmed if those five million Scots have greater access to political decision-making.

Mr Major's proposals will be unveiled by the Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth, at the end of the month. They may well involve Scottish MPs elected to Westminster debating Scottish legislation separately before it is finally voted on by the House of Commons as a whole. So Westminster would retain the right to propose legislation; a conclave of Scottish MPs would have the right to amend it. It is most unlikely that Westminster would risk overruling amendments approved in Scotland. So a new accommodation with nationalism would have been arrived at, but within the Westminster system, within the Union.

It is not just Mr Major's frankness about Scotland that should be welcomed; it is also his serious engagement with what is probably the most far-reaching and demanding of tasks facing the modern political leader - the reshaping of the nation state. There are at least three components to that task - making Britain more competitive in the global market, finding it a settled place within a more integrated Europe and responding to the demands for devolution from the nations and regions that make up the UK. Mr Major has made precious little contribution to making Britain more competitive. But on the other two - European integration and consti-



tutional reform - he could make some significant progress in his faltering, quiet way.

As far as constitutional reform is concerned, he has gone from being an implacable defender of the Union to realising that it has to become more flexible to survive. He could yet preside over a historic peace settlement in Northern Ireland, which would refashion the province's relationship with Britain. His proposals for Scotland could be taken up in Wales. On Europe, Mr Major has a new-found confidence that the arguments are going his way both within the EU and within his party. That confidence may be premature but it is not altogether without grounds.

It is almost as if Mr Major has stumbled by chance upon this theme of constitutional reform. Yet if he were to pull it off - a United Kingdom in which the various parts were more at ease with one another and a Britain more at ease with itself in Europe - it would be quite an achievement. It is not one that would necessarily be rewarded at the polls, but one that might be remarked upon approvingly by historians.

The Major approach, if that is not too flattering a description for something so ad hoc, has the shortcomings that are typical of him. He recognises that Scotland could be a viable separate country. Yet he argues that too much democracy would be dangerous; the Scots cannot be trusted with power because they might eventually vote for separation. This is the sort of argument against democracy that *ancien regimes* of one kind or another have been using for centuries. The case for a Home Rule parliament for Scotland is irresistible on moral

grounds, and may become so on practical and political grounds.

Despite their limitations, the Scottish proposals are evidence that Mr Major is starting to learn how to fight back against Mr Blair - by getting in first, camping on the Labour leader's terrain or simply lifting his ideas. On Wednesday, during the Queen's Speech debate, for example, he dismissed the Labour leader's suggestion that the Asylum and Immigration Bill should be handled by a special Commons committee to prevent race becoming an issue in British politics. By Thursday, he was seriously considering the idea, and if he has any political nous, by next week he will be promoting it as his own.

His initiative on Scottish governance may be inadequate but it is not without merit, and it will put Labour's politically correct, soft nationalists on the spot. Everything the Tories are doing in Scotland - giving local authorities more freedom of manoeuvre, for instance - is designed to put Labour on the back foot. With this move, Mr Major will claim to be offering real devolution of power, which he will contrast to the grandiose, bloated, bureaucratic talking shop on offer from Labour.

Of course, Mr Major has a long way to go before he solves the Conservatives' great political problem in Scotland - the vast majority of Scots elect Labour MPs, but are ruled by Tories from Westminster. These proposals are unlikely to solve this problem, but they will alleviate it - and at the very least, Mr Blair will know that he still has a fight on his hands.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Life beyond Westminster's two-party club

From Mr David Rendel, MP
Sir, Anthony King's article about the SDP ("The end of the Mad Hatters", 16 November) demonstrates, once again, the curiously Westminster-centric attitude it is possible to have as many political commentators.

Mr King asserts that over the past 20 years the British party system has scarcely changed. Has he not noticed that, during that time, the Liberal Democrat Party has moved from third place to second place, overtaking the Conservatives, in local government? We have moved from fewer than 1,000 councillors to more than 5,000 councillors, and having been in control of no councils at all, we are now in control of more than 50, and are the largest party in more than 50 others.

These changes began before the formation of the SDP, continued steadily while that party was in existence, and have, if anything, accelerated since the merger of the SDP and the Liberal Party. Many of those thousands of councillors now proud to call themselves Liberal Democrats were drawn into the new party as a result of the formation of the SDP.

It is, of course, true that the huge popularity of Tony Blair is likely to prove in a few months' time. The volatility of the current British electorate can lead to very large transient swings in national popularity.

In contrast, the increasing

strength of the Liberal Democrats in local government, in the formation of the SDP, has played such a significant part, is now so firm and so long-standing, that it will surely be seen in history as of far greater significance than any temporary national swings.

The fact that so many of our current parliamentary seats have been won on the basis of previous local election success shows that it can only be a matter of time before we achieve increasing success at national level, this time based on a much more secure and long-lasting foundation.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID RENDEL
MP for Newbury (Lib Dem)
House of Commons
London, SW1

The writer is Local Government spokesman for the Liberal Democrats.

From Mr John Bates
Sir, As we gather in Weston-Super-Mare this weekend for our annual conference, the members of the Social Democratic Party will take with a pinch of salt yet another report of our demise ("The end of the Mad Hatters", 16 November).

Professor King's assessment of the problems of the SDP is scholarly enough but makes some false claims and draws some inaccurate conclusions.

The SDP will certainly not have appeared to vanish without trace to those very many

local electors who are still happily represented by SDP councillors around the country. It is also wrong to perpetuate the myth that the SDP merged with the then Liberal party. Only a minority of SDP members voted for the merger. Nor was the continuing SDP "dedicated to David Owen's leadership". We were, and more importantly still are, dedicated to Social Democracy. It was our good fortune to have a politician of Dr Owen's stature to lead us. In those circumstances only a party of imbeciles would have wished to be led by anyone else.

Professor King's aberrant conclusion is that Labour's conversion to Conservatism is a reflection of the spirit of the age. This is sheer nonsense. It is a clear expression of the corrupt effect of a corrupt and outdated electoral system. Labour's leaders have simply abandoned "principle without power" in the hope of achieving power, presumably by principles sent to the wall.

The SDP is now a small party but we will continue to look to a future and to prepare radical policies for a country that will one day reject once and for all the woefully inadequate electoral system and the wearisome and second-rate politicians with which it saddles us.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BATES
President
Social Democratic Party
Morecambe
16 November

How the V&A should charge

From Mr Peter Forster
Sir, The Victoria and Albert Museum's proposal to impose a compulsory £10 entrance fee fills this London artist with dismay ("V&A director wants £10 admission fee", 16 November). It presupposes that we all visit a museum or art gallery under exactly the same conditions, as if we were all tourists cramming in everything (or as much as possible) in one fell swoop, "doing" the sight and ticking it off in our Blue Guides.

We Londoners visit our museums during our lunch breaks, in the course of our shopping expeditions, or en route between appointments. We artists drop in to see a particular gallery or exhibit, or to check a specific reference.

Ten pounds for a whole day or an afternoon amidst all the splendours of the V&A is not unreasonable (I love the place sufficiently to say that it is cheap), but for 10 minutes or a quarter of an hour it is just a bit steep, especially if the

gallery one came to see is closed for the day or the exhibit is temporarily not on display.

I am willing (and the museum at present takes my honesty on trust) to pay according to the time I have at my disposal or the time I need. Culture has its price as much as anything else, but the price, like most other things, must be relative.

A city museum is not a stately home which one travels miles through the country to tour, nor is it a theatre or an opera house where one pays to see a complete performance, not simply ones favourite scene or aria - and where, incidentally, one pays more for a good seat than for a partial view.

The V&A's proposed fee is the equivalent of charging the same price for a seat in the gods as for the royal box.

Yours faithfully,
PETER FORSTER
London, N4
16 November

Transparent tactics

From Mr Norman Hogg, MP
Sir, The Prime Minister has from time to time demonstrated a capacity to surprise his opponents inside and outside the Tory Party. His announcement, exclusive to the *Independent*, that he intends to make a statement "within a very few weeks" on constitutional change in Scotland is a surprise. The content is likely to be less surprising and add up to something less than constitutional reform.

The Labour and Liberal Democrat proposal for a Scottish Parliament is the product of consensus worked out in the Scottish Constitutional Convention which includes Labour's 49 MPs, the Liberal Democrats who are Scotland's second largest opposition party, most Scottish local authorities, the churches, STUC and a range of other organisations. Its popularity among Scottish voters is founded on that consent.

Mr Major and his Tories abandoned consensus on the constitutional question when Baroness Thatcher won power in 1979. The Scots abandoned the Tories soon after. The Prime Minister and his Scottish Secretary have little prospect of regaining the ground with a started up Scottish Grand Committee that leaves the final say exactly where it always has been - with the Government of the day. The Scots are not so easily duped.

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN HOGG
MP for Cumberland and Kilsyth (Lab)
House of Commons
London, SW1
17 November

When in Naples

From Mr Michael P. Faris
Sir, It does not need to be cold for the men and women of Naples to bring out their winter overcoats (Rome Diary, 15 November). When I lived there some years ago I was amazed at the extraordinary change that takes place on 1 September.

Winter officially begins on this date and all swimming pools and beaches are closed until May. It is also the date when Neapolitans don their winter garb, whatever the actual temperature.

It certainly made a bizarre sight. While holidaymakers and non-Italian residents were in summer clothes the locals were dressed as if expecting the next ice age to begin.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL P. FARIS
Castle Douglas,
Kirkcubrightshire

Telly addicts

Mr Roland Anderson
Sir, So, 11-year-olds are shunning homework for TV, eh? (report, 17 November). Well, good for them. What business have they got doing homework at their age? Parents complain that TV is boring - how much more so must homework be if kids shut it in favour of the box? Kids don't like homework and they do like TV: let them live their own lives for a change.

Yours faithfully,
ROLAND ANDERSON
Head of Humanities
Sturminster School
Leiston, Suffolk

DAVID AARONOVITCH

Peak of pique



The man who argues that he is still faithful to his wife if he and his mistress indulge only in oral sex is, one would have thought, a man to be trusted. Yes, he is indulging in an extreme form of casuistry, but at least such a man is constructing a logical argument to cover his immediate, or ... difficulties.

Such a man, in my view, is Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Congress in the United States. Like many of our own crusaders for family values, Newt has built his expertise on the back of several marriages that he and an Anne Hollander met up and agreed that, while vice was too nice, *soixante-neuf* wasn't adulterous. Presumably, however, they chose not to share this ingenious argument with first Mrs Gingrich.

Satisfied with the outcome of this dispensation, Mr Gingrich has gone on to become famous for his ability to link ends with means. Through his televised lectures, his audiotapes and his books Newt has shown that he possesses the "vision thing" - and then gone on to demonstrate the Strategy, Tactics and Projects things, too. His interviews often sound like a convention of management consultants on speed, as he hurtles through personal development, the superhighway and great moments from the career of Kemal Atatürk. His status as a big thinker is confirmed by his friendship with Heidi and Alvin Toffler - brilliant philosophers of the Third Wave, but too often confused with two hairy, elderly ex-hippies with execrable dress sense.

In short, Newt is my kind of guy. Or was. And then this week he revealed the true Gingrich. His obstinacy in refusing to agree any budget compromise with President Bill Clinton was not the result of a careful calculation of the electoral consequences of the collapse of federal government. Nor was it fine tuned to call the president's bluff. No, he did it because he was - in the vernacular - pissed off. Bill, he felt, had treated him shabbily on

their flight back from Israel after the funeral of Yitzhak Rabin.

While Gingrich and his Senate Republican colleague Bob Dole had been put at the back of the plane (presumably too close to the loos and the microwave), Clinton had snubbed them by sitting up at the front, near the pilot. So for 12 long hours Bob and Newt sat there waiting for the call that never came. To add further humiliation, upon landing the twin Speakers were forced to disembark by the back door. Said Newt: "Every president we have ever flown with has had us up front." This showed him that no compromise on the budget was possible, and that the White House "wanted a fight". Within days 800,000 federal employees were idle.

To take an important public decision out of pure pique is, on the face of it, quite rare. We remember the exceptions, such as Lord Cardigan, who charged the guns at Balaclava partly because of his animosity towards his equally horse-headed fellow peer, Lord Lucan.

Actually, as the incomparable Norman Dixon has pointed out, this lack of rationality is not uncommon. Among a certain type of leaders he discerns something he calls the "Phaeton complex", after the son of Phoebeus, who insisted in driving his father's chariot across the heavens and was eventually stopped from killing everything in his way by a thunderbolt from Zeus. Pushing them on is an irrational desire to prove themselves.

And what do they have in common? A study of the 24 British prime ministers between 1809 and 1937 showed that in 16 cases, as children they had suffered the permanent loss of a parent through separation or death. As adults they showed tendencies towards extreme reserve, solitariness, an obsessive need for love, recklessness and (often) a belief in the supernatural. Needless to say, young Newt lost his father at an early age. So did young Bill. If I were an American civil servant, I'd be looking for another job.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

Lord take my soul... but the struggle continues - Ken Saro-Wiwa, Nigerian minority rights activist, before he was hanged

All women really want is to grow up, fall in love and live happily ever after. I did. I still do - Clare Short, Shadow Transport Secretary
If they want we will give them a sleeping bag, but there is something romantic about sleeping under the desk. They want to do it - Bill Gates, Microsoft chief, on his young software programmers
I was flattered but told her, "Sorry honey, I'm married" - Soggy, singer with Madness, who turned down a dinner date with Madonna
The world-wide drug business would be harder to organise if banks, the Swiss banks foremost among them, were more careful about accepting large deposits based on the proceeds of crime - Lord Bethell

How can you sell a new product to the public if it hasn't got a name? - Jacques Santer, president of the European Union, on the single currency

These are truly scenes from hell, written on the darkest pages of human history - Bosnia war crimes indictment
At the moment, we don't have a peace process. We need to re-establish the peace process - Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Féin

Victims of the Housing Bill

From Ms Diana Maddock, MP
Sir, Your headline about the forthcoming Housing Bill, "Single parents to lose council house priority", (16 November) is highly misleading.

Single parents do not have, and have never had, priority for council houses. As the law currently stands, they have equal priority with any other household that includes children, a pregnant woman or a disabled or elderly person. This means that if they are evicted or repossessed, they are automatically defined as "vulnerable" by local authorities and therefore prioritised for council housing.

It was the 1977 Homeless Persons Act, proposed by the then Liberal MP Stephen Ross, that first gave homeless families with children priority for secure housing tenancies. What the Government is now proposing to do is reverse this by giving local authorities licence to put these families (of all kinds, single and double parent) into insecure, unstable temporary accommodation. As well as being expensive and stressful for families, temporary accommodation has been shown to have a profound impact on children's education.

All homeless families will suffer under the Government's short-sighted proposals. Conservative ministers should not be allowed to get away with claiming that it is only single teenage mothers (who occupy fewer than 0.3 per cent of council properties) who will be hit. Yours sincerely,
DIANA MADDOCK
MP for Christchurch and East Dorset (Lib Dem)
House of Commons
London, SW1

Posthaste to Inverness

From Mr David Smith
Sir, Christian Wolmar is right to extol the virtues of high-speed rail travel, the particular benefits of city centre to city centre travel, and rail's crucial role in helping to regenerate our large cities ("Trains signal start of ground battle with airlines", 15 November). He refers to the extent of investment in new high-speed lines across Europe. In Britain, only the new 68-mile route from London, St Pancras to the Channel tunnel is planned.

I would suggest that now is the right time to begin to consider a northwards extension of this new high-speed link. The first phase could link the new line immediately north of the Thames crossing at Rainham

with Rugby on the West Coast Line. Connections with the East Coast and Midland Lines could be made where it crosses them. In this way all major cities north of London could be connected directly to the European rail network. Built to the larger European loading gauge much freight could transfer from road to rail.

The West Coast Line is badly in need of refurbishment. Whether it could be improved to become a fully fledged high-speed line seems questionable. So my proposal also provides a method of providing a high-speed alternative to the West Coast Line between Rugby and London for domestic journeys. Yours sincerely,
DAVID SMITH
Principal Research Officer
Sheffield City Council
Sheffield
16 November

High hopes

From Ms Suzanne Lucas
Sir, Your article "How to be healed" (Section Two, 16 November) stated that "Tibetan medicine is particularly effective in the treatment of diabetes".

The British Diabetic Association recognises that "alternative" medicines are becoming increasingly popular and may fulfil a need not met by current orthodox diabetes care. However, it is important that any alternative treatment is seen as complementary and on no account should conventional medication be stopped.

Diabetes is a chronic condition, and at the moment incurable, and although there is effective treatment available many people find it difficult to adapt to diagnosis. It is vital that diabetes treatment is given once prescribed and if this is stopped for any reason it could lead to life-threatening consequences. The search for a miracle cure is not surprising, but it is important not to raise people's hopes.

Yours sincerely,
SUZANNE LUCAS
Director of Care
British Diabetic Association
London, W1

with Rugby on the West Coast Line. Connections with the East Coast and Midland Lines could be made where it crosses them. In this way all major cities north of London could be connected directly to the European rail network. Built to the larger European loading gauge much freight could transfer from road to rail.

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DAVID SMITH
Principal Research Officer
Sheffield City Council
Sheffield
16 November

Crowning glory of actor's career

From Mr David Whiting
Sir, The British theatre is all the poorer, with the death of Robert Stephens ("Stage mourns loss of great 'Lear'", and obituaries/gazette, 14 November).

To see him as King Lear, at Stratford, was a truly moving experience, and one I shall never forget.

His acting had an extraordinary gravity and a certain grandeur; here was a man bringing to bear the weight of his life's experience in a great



Robert Stephens as King Lear

Stuart Morris

tragic role, and the sheer power of his delivery in the storm scene was remarkable.

Such was the strength of his presence, that it seemed to be felt even when he was off-stage, a kind of brooding intensity that filled you with anticipation for his return.

It is a happy story that after the wilderness of the Eighties, this actor "came home" so triumphantly in the Nineties, and the British theatre rediscovered one of its greatest actors. Yours faithfully,
DAVID WHITING
Hampton Lovett,
Worcestershire
13 November

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL (Fax 0171-293 2856; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) and include a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

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09/11/2015



COMMENT

The most obvious ploy – a windfall utilities tax – has apparently been ruled out, but there are subtler artifices Kenneth Clarke can use to become the ultimate corporate predator

Raising feel-good billions by sleight of hand

With record receipts from corporation tax in October and an over-riding political imperative to restore the feel-good factor, the temptation for the Chancellor to raid companies to pay for personal income tax reductions must be huge. The most obvious ploy – a windfall utilities tax – has apparently been ruled out, but there are subtler artifices Kenneth Clarke can use to become the ultimate corporate predator.

The pressure is all the greater since, despite October's bounty of a £7.3bn corporation tax inflow, the Treasury had expected still more this year and may face a shortfall of £2bn. Worse still, the increase in the corporation tax take is set to tail off sharply in the next financial year, as receipts respond to this year's profit slowdown. The Institute for Fiscal Studies is projecting a much more modest increase for 1996/7.

With Tony Blair currently wooing business, the Chancellor cannot afford to be seen increasing the burden on the corporate sector by smash and grab. What is more likely is that he will exploit timing technicalities to boost revenue next year by sleight of hand.

One option would be to reduce the advance corporation tax credit paid to tax-exempt institutions such as pension funds by another notch, from 20 to 15 per cent, while leaving the ACT rate at 20 per cent. The Chancellor could combine this measure with another cut in corporation tax from 33 to 32 per cent. The revenue gain and loss of about £1bn would roughly cancel each other

out – with one significant rider. The revenue gain would be immediate because ACT is payable at the same time as dividends. The revenue loss, however, would not be felt until 1997-8 because of the nine-month delay in paying mainstream corporation tax.

Meanwhile the Government could present such a change as a much more effective boost to investment than Gordon Brown's proposals three weeks ago, by claiming it addresses the bias in the tax system towards high dividend payouts at the expense of retained profits.

When Norman Lamont took £1bn off the pension funds the same way, by reducing the ACT tax credit to 20 per cent, share prices fell sharply, there was uproar in the City and there has been a long campaign since then to forestall a repeat. The insinuations argue quite rightly that if their total flow of dividend receipts falls then so does the actuarial value of the pension funds, which eventually have to be topped up again, largely by companies rather than employees. One way or another, the Government would be playing with pension money.

However, the tactic of off-setting the ACT change with a cut in corporation tax rates, to rebuild the resources of the corporate sector again, is probably the only way the Chancellor could seriously defend the move without losing his remaining friends in the City.

Another technical option would be to change the timing of mainstream corpora-

tion tax. At present, this is paid nine months after the end of the company year. However, in several other countries, payments are made on a quarterly basis during the course of the company year. If the Treasury were to move to such a system in one year flat, the effect would be a staggering temporary boost to revenues of approaching £20bn. In practice, such a change would be phased in, in order to soften the cashflow impact on companies. He could easily get several billions out of the manoeuvre – sufficient to finance more than 1p off the basic rate. Most voters would have a hard time understanding where he found it.

Doubts as electricity row comes to a head

The political row over the reorganisation of the electricity industry comes to a head next week when Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, decides whether to refer the bids by PowerGen for Midlands Electricity and National Power for Southern to the Monopolies Commission. Many believe his clearance of all the other bids so far indicates he will confirm open season by approving these two as well.

But there is a nagging doubt, at least partly because Mr Lang remains adamant that he really is treating the bids case by case, on their merits. It is still possible that these two bids, the most dramatic moves yet towards

vertical integration between generators and electricity distributors, will be kicked into touch.

Since a monopolies inquiry would be a complex one, focusing on matters such as the operation of the electricity pool – a subject few pretend to grasp – it would be surprising to see an outcome before the early spring. By then, the two target companies are more than likely to have been carried off by other predators.

If there is no case for referring bids by foreign companies, Midlands and Southern will have no protection at all. This threat of a foreign walkover has been widely canvassed by PowerGen and National Power in their campaign to avoid a reference.

If there is one, Midlands and Southern would then have to pull an instant alternative out of the hat. The obvious step would be to create the first merger between two regional electricity companies. Southern has certainly said in the past it might be interested in such a move, which is the one to watch out for if Mr Lang does refer the current bids.

Railway timetable steaming ahead

It may be hard for the Opposition and the train-spotter brigade to accept, but the Government has privatised nearly half the railways already by value, with the £1.8bn sale

of the rolling stock leasing companies. Claims yesterday that it is about to delay the flotation of Railtrack from the April or May date now slotted in appear to be based on strategy documents written by advisers before the Tory Party conference, when Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, bit the bullet and announced the flotation date. Delay was an option that he discarded.

With the railway timetable steaming ahead, the more interesting question is whether the British Energy sale, slotted in for early summer, a few weeks after Railtrack, is still on schedule. The two most difficult privatisations the Government has attempted are set up for the same brief window in the summer.

British Energy, the merged nuclear company, has told ministers that it could not possibly ready itself for an earlier sale in the spring, because of the mountain of paperwork required to transfer nuclear site licences to the new organisation.

There are other big issues still to be settled, including the debt burden. The Government is likely to keep this high deliberately – perhaps as much as £4bn – to prevent the company splashing out on takeover bids for electricity distribution companies. But that decision is a technicality beside the task of preparing a convincing valuation of the company's long-term waste liabilities for a City prospectus. If one of these sales is to be delayed or called off, nuclear is the likelier candidate.

Internet shares race further ahead

MATHEW HORSMAN

Internet stocks in New York and London yesterday raced sharply higher for the second consecutive day, fuelled by a downgrading of software giant Microsoft by investment house Goldman Sachs.

According to City and Wall Street analysts, Goldman's decision to take Microsoft off its list of "recommended" stocks focused attention on small companies involved in providing Internet services.

The list includes companies likely to outperform the market by at least 10 per cent. Microsoft had been included ever since it came to market in 1986.

Shares in UUNet Technology, the Internet service provider, rose in morning trading by \$5 to \$95 on Nasdaq, and was still trading mid-day at about \$93. The rise had an immediate effect on UK-listed Unipalm, the Internet service provider, which is being bought in an all-share deal by UUNet.

In London, Unipalm shares rose to 110p to 86p, largely on the strength of UUNet's share performance in New York. The US company has offered 0.154 shares per Unipalm share, and has received acceptances in excess of 90 per cent. Since the offer was launched last month, the offer has leapt in value from about 450p a share.

"All the technology stocks are rising in New York," said one analyst. "There's an expectation that there will be high growth across the sector." The best-known Internet stock of all,

Netscape, rose \$6.5 to \$107.25 by lunchtime.

The Internet, which can link computers around the globe, has attracted huge investment from hundreds of small companies in sectors ranging from access and navigation software to network development and graphics for "pages" on the Internet. Well-capitalised companies such as Microsoft and MCI, the US long-distance telephone operator, have also invested heavily.

The Microsoft Network was launched this autumn, helping to fuel the craze for Internet-related stocks. But Goldman Sachs downgraded Microsoft in light of the "serious threat" posed by the smaller companies that dominate the Internet software sector.

Richard Sherlund, author of the Goldman Sachs report on Microsoft, said the software giant had been slower than other companies to introduce products for the global computer network. He fears the company's rapid growth in the past 10 years may not be sustainable as competition in the Internet sector increases.

According to John Sidmore, chief executive of UUNet: "It is not necessarily true that the big guns will win. Microsoft and Intel were small once, and they walked off with the cheese."

UUNet is seen as a particularly strong player in the Internet market because of its focus on business customers and its alliance with Microsoft, under which it developed and operates an access network for MSN.

Firecrest soars after Energis access deal

Marketing and Internet company Firecrest climbed 28p to 203p yesterday, on news of a deal with Energis, the telephone company owned by the National Grid, writes Matthew Horsman.

The deal will initially allow 20,000 subscribers access to the Internet for the cost of a local call, but the limit can be raised at any time. The company said the service would provide coverage of 87 per cent of the UK immediately.

The service will cost £7.99 per month, with no usage charges other than the price of a local call. For those subscribers on cable networks that provide free local

calling, the Internet access will be free.

Firecrest shares started their recent rise last week, on news that the company had won the exclusive right to Digiphone, a US-developed technology that allows users to make long-distance telephone calls over the Internet for the price of a local call.

From just 67p, the shares rose to 158p last Friday.

Originally a marketing and promotions company, Firecrest branched out into Internet-related businesses last year, when it acquired Nethead, an access provider.

Silicon Glen: Foreign investment tops £2bn and Scotland now supplies one-third of Europe's PC output



NEC at Livingston: a major investor in Scotland and one of the largest customers for the new silicon wafer plant

More Japanese electronics jobs for Scotland

JOHN ARLIDGE
Scotland Correspondent

Scotland's Silicon Glen – the electronics manufacturing area between Edinburgh and Glasgow – won its second big investment of the week yesterday.

Shin-Etsu Handotai announced a £160m expansion of its silicon wafer plant at Livingston, creating 235 jobs. The investment comes three days after Chunghwa, the Taiwanese picture tube manufacturer confirmed a £260m investment deal at Mossend, near Glasgow.

The Japanese company, the world's largest silicon wafer manufacturer, said it was investing in Livingston because of the success of its existing plant in the town which employs 300. Construction has started and production should start late next year.

The company will expand its range of silicon wafers – the basic components of computer chips. The investment brings total Japanese investment in Livingston to more than £1bn. Many of the wafers will be supplied to NEC, which is building a £500m manufacturing plant nearby.

Together, Shin-Etsu and

Chunghwa have this week announced 3,500 new jobs in central Scotland, an area blighted by the shake-out of traditional "smokestack" industries.

George Kynoch, the Scottish industry minister, said it was "another example of a company, which has already been here for a number of years, expanding its Scottish presence to take full advantage of the benefits which Silicon Glen offers."

Katsunori Kubo, Shin-Etsu's managing director, said that the European semiconductor market was expanding sharply: "The project is a vote of confidence in our local workforce and we believe it will also have a beneficial effect on the local community, for the new jobs being created are high quality and long term. This commits the company to Livingston."

Shin-Etsu's announcement is that latest in a series of investments in the area. Recent foreign investment exceeds £2bn. Scotland now produces 35 per cent of all personal computers made in Europe and electronic products account for 40 per cent of Scotland's exports, worth about £8bn.

Interactive Telephone in talks with creditors

DAVID HELLIER



Tim Renton: resigned as chairman on policy grounds

Interactive Telephone Services, a company that used to be chaired by the former arts minister Tim Renton, is negotiating with its creditors and founders about a possible financial restructuring.

According to City sources, the company is short of cash and is discussing ways of injecting new funds into it. Talks are said to be currently taking place with a variety of City institutions.

ITS was set up by the entrepreneur Nicholas Scarr and his

cousin Anthony Tait. According to its last set of full accounts to June 1994, the company lost £3.9m on turnover of £2.3m. Shareholders' funds were £1.5m. The company's shares were traded until early autumn on London's Rule 4.2 market.

That market has since closed and the company has not indicated what it is planning to do.

"The company was always going to be loss-making but the losses were greater than originally expected," said a City source.

Mr Scarr said the board did not want to make any comment.

The former minister became involved in July 1992. He resigned as chairman in July 1994, stating that this was the result of a policy difference over the future direction of the companies. At the time he remained a shareholder of the group.

The company has attracted controversy over the years, especially when it emerged in 1994 that it was making around £12,500 a day out of handling telephone calls connected with the Rwanda emergency appeal.

Opposition MPs demanded urgent action, claiming that, al-

though the company's actions fell within Charity Commission guidelines most people would be appalled to learn that firms could make such profits.

The charities involved in the appeal, said that using a commercial phone company was the only way to ensure all potential income was collected.

Also that year the company had to suspend a telephone game offering a monthly top prize of £250,000 after suggestions that it was running an illegal lottery. The company was eventually fined £750 and ordered to pay costs of £7,500.

National Express chief to retire

National Express Group announced yesterday that its chief executive, Ray McEnhill, 55, is to retire early for health reasons, writes David Hellier.

Sources close to the company said Mr McEnhill, who has spearheaded the coach operator's recent expansion into airport and bus operations, was advised by his doctor to retire early fol-

lowing heart problems. He had major heart surgery a couple of years ago.

The board was informed of Mr McEnhill's decision a few days ago and is searching for a successor. It will look at external candidates, although Adam Mills, the company's deputy chief executive, is considered by analysts to be the favourite for the job.

Mr McEnhill, whose total remuneration package last year came to £306,000, has agreed to stay on until the board has chosen a successor.

After leading the management buy-in and then the flotation of the group in 1992 he owned nearly 1.7 million of the company's shares, according to the last set of annual accounts.

The shares yesterday rose 3p to 387p, still some way below the high for the year of 415p.

In an attempt to steady the market's nerves over the announcement the company said its operating divisions were all performing in line with expectations.

Positive trends highlighted in its interim report had continued in the third quarter.

Third warning at Eurodollar

TOM STEVENSON
Deputy City Editor

Eurodollar, the car rental group which came to the market in July 1994, saw its shares plunge yesterday after warning that second half profits would be even lower than a disastrous first half result which saw a plunge from £8.2m to £2.4m. The company blamed a sharp fall in car resale values and higher insurance premiums and said it would take "a considerable period of time to restore margins and profitability."

The shares, which were valued at 220p when Eurodollar came to the market, plunged 39p to 68p on the news, a 36 per cent decline. Yesterday's warning was its third in the past six months. When it last warned on profits in September, the company promised to maintain its annual dividend at 9.35p and it lived up to the first half of that pledge yesterday with a maintained 3.12p interim payout. There was a warning, however,

that it would "review the level of dividend payable, if any, at the year end."

Ian Mosley, chief executive, said: "The depreciation burden is expected to increase further as a result of increased vehicle holding costs. Until very recently, we believe the effect would be one-off in nature and contained to the disposals of our 1995 M-registered vehicles. However, the further substantial drop in value in November was far in excess of even our worst expectations."

The sharp fall in profits in the first half to September reflected a jump in cost of sales from £12.2m to £21.0m. This blew a hole in sales, which actually increased from £43m to £48.7m, benefiting from an active corporate market where volumes and prices both increased.

That made up for a very weak domestic personal market, hit by low consumer confidence. Earnings per share of 3.63p (10.95p) just covered the interim dividend payout.

Fears that rail sell-off will favour managers

RUSSELL HOTTEN

News that Resurgence Railways is the surprise first choice to win one of the passenger rail franchises has done nothing to dispel fears that much of the privatised network will simply be sold to its managers.

Unlike Resurgence, almost all the other private companies bidding for the first three rail franchises have been eliminated, leaving the field dominated by management teams.

Like much of the British Rail network that has been sold so far, management buyout teams

have been the main winners. Red Star parcels, two of the three rolling stock companies and a catering arm have all been MBOs.

Critics do not question the quality and expertise of the management teams, but ask whether their success indicates a lack of government faith in the privatisation process.

One executive interested in buying a franchise said: "Truly private companies have done well in the tendering process so far. You wonder about the Government's commitment to change the culture of BR."

Such a view was echoed by James Sherwood, chairman of Sea Containers, which has withdrawn from the tendering process after being passed up for one of the first rail franchises.

Failure to bring in new blood to run the franchises would hinder the need for new investment in the railways, he told the Independent. "The Government really only wants the network to be managed for the primary benefit of Railtrack and the rolling stock companies, which are being sold off to private investors."

Mr Sherwood had been

adamant that the rail franchisees, which the regulator said should run for seven years, could only operate economically if about 12 years to justify the necessary capital investment.

But it appears that the authorities are prepared to be flexible in their attempt to get the franchise holders to invest in the railways. It is understood that the management buyout team bidding for the London, Tilbury and Southend railway will be allowed a 15-year franchise.

The LTS team, which fought off three private sector bidders

and is the sole remaining candidate, argued that a 15-year term was needed for the necessary purchase of an entire fleet of new trains.

The team, led by its director Chris Kinchin-Smith, fought off a group of local bus companies, GB Railways, a consortium led by Canadians Max Steinhoff and Michael Shabers, and Stagecoach.

Private companies are worried that the inside knowledge of the management teams means outside bidders have a slim chance of successfully competing against them.

An exception is Resurgence Railways, a private company that is favourite to win the franchise for Great Western Railway, which runs InterCity services from London's Paddington.

The likely bidder for the third franchise is a management team in partnership with a subsidiary of Generale des Eaux, the French water company. They will fight it out with National Express, the bus group. Sea Containers and Stagecoach had also bid. These first three franchises are due to be allocated by the end of the year.

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Foundations in place for building recovery

The two building sectors, construction (which includes housebuilders) and building materials, have been among the market's worst performers over the past five years.

As the chart shows, the underperformance has accelerated during 1995 as the trading background for their constituent companies has deteriorated. In that context it might seem a reckless call to suggest that the time has come to turn positive on building shares.

But it is a stock market truism that the time to buy shares is when the news is harshest. This is doubly true for sectors as cyclically volatile as these – according to one estimate, 80 per cent of a sector's outperformance occurs in the first quarter of a change in sentiment, so it is plainly dangerous to wait for the turn before buying.

NatWest Securities, which has just produced a weighty research tome on the building sector, believes the time to go overweight is when the trend in a sector's fundamentals is getting less bad but before that trend has turned upwards again – and well before analysts have started upgrading forecasts once more.

So after a dreadful 1995, what signs are there that things will start looking up in 1996, and which companies are likely to be the biggest beneficiaries?

First, according to NatWest, the current slump is due to a mid-cycle pause in the wider economy that will necessarily be short-lived.

In other words, this downturn is more like that experienced in 1985 before a resumption of strong growth, than the sharp downturn of 1989-92.

The underlying economy is in a reasonable shape, which should lead to a small increase in building demand (see the chart) of perhaps 1 per cent

compared with an estimated 2 per cent decline in 1995. Housing starts should rise by up to 4 per cent after a year of substantial de-stocking in 1995.

As a result of these trends, earnings growth will be faster in 1996 than 1995, a reversal of what analysts had previously expected, and that will make share price ratings appear increasingly attractive.

That would not be difficult – the contracting sector is only 3 per cent off its all-time low and building materials companies, which have fared

slightly better, are less than a tenth off the low point achieved in 1992.

Other bullish factors include a probable peaking in interest rates for the foreseeable future thanks to a slowing in the wider economy and the expectation of more active consumers next year. In short, growth should return in the second half of next year.

So who will benefit most? In the long term, a reversal of a decade of underbuilding as industrialists begin to expand capacity and householders resume shelved repair and maintenance

spending will help across the board.

In the short term, however, 1996 will be characterised by a re-stocking of housing starts that will favour the producers and distributors of building materials. BPB, CRH, Redland and RMC look interesting among the materials groups, with Meyer, Wolsey and Travis Perkins favoured among the distributors.

Oil giants on a slippery slope

After a relatively upbeat 1995, the prospects for the UK oil sector are on the skids again. New research from Nikko Europe, the broker, suggests the operating environment is getting tougher, putting pressure on earnings and dividends forecasts.

This deterioration will upset some of the industry's more optimistic estimates and cause the oil majors to underperform.

Pressure on the oil price, which is being squeezed by a number of factors, and pressure on downstream margins will leave integrated oil companies such as BP struggling.

Nikko expects explorers such as Lomo and Enterprise, with their now improved focus, to provide the sector's relatively safe havens.

The firm is predicting a further fall in the price of Brent crude, which has already been weak ahead of the Opec meeting on 21 November. As production from the non-Opec countries has been increasing, even a roll-over of Opec's quotas will lead to over-supply and pressure on prices. That will offset any rise stemming from a possible oil embargo on Nigeria as a result of the current diplomatic fracas.

The net result is expected to be a \$1 decline in the price to \$16 next year.

Such a scenario would normally hit the exploration groups, but Nikko expects them to buck the trend thanks to increasing exploration expenditure and the adoption of a more focused strategy. Lomo, for example, has sold off peripheral interests. Hardy Oil & Gas has sold its Canadian operations and is considering pulling out of other areas such as Algeria and Namibia.

The benefits were evident yesterday when Hardy reported pre-tax profits of £254,000 for the six months to September compared with a loss of £634,000 last year.

Refining margins are forecast to improve after the grim levels seen this year where returns were affected by over-capacity. Whether that will make up for a less promising outlook on the forecourt, where increasing competition from the supermarket groups is eating into the oil companies' market share, is a difficult call. In the UK the supermarkets groups such as Sainsbury and Tesco account for 20 per cent of the petrol retailing market. In France the hypermarkets have grabbed more than 40 per cent.

To combat this, the oil majors are having to improve their non-oil offer in petrol stations by adding convenience stores and selling a broader range of goods. BP has already enjoyed some success by doing this as well as weeding out poorer performing low-volume locations from its portfolio.

Of the oil majors Shell looks the most defensive with its strong balance sheet and yield premium. BP remains more highly geared and is on some sell lists along with Burmah Castrol and Total. Of the explorers, Enterprise and Lomo look the most promising.

Al-Fayed seeks to share out the bruising burden

Earlier correspondence between Mohamed Al-Fayed and Rupert Murdoch over the sale of the now-defunct *Today* newspaper shows the Egyptian to be a sensitive soul.

Writing to express his high regard for the Australian-born media mogul on 12 September, Mr Al-Fayed said he had abandoned the idea of legal redress over his failure to secure the title "even though I know it will damage my hard-won reputation as Britain's champion litigator."

"My bruises are not so vivid now," admitted the Harrods owner, who nevertheless is livid about the hills submitted by his advisers.

"Lawyers and accountants don't come cheap and I ran up a bill of £100,000 in the abortive negotiations. I am not complaining. But if you were prepared to take a quarter share of the loss I would be delighted to dedicate the entire £25,000 to the Mary Hare Grammar School at Newbury which does such wonderful work for children with impaired hearing... I am sure it would not make too big a hole in your pocket."

The plea falls on deaf ears.

A poor turnout from the home team at yesterday's annual conference of the European Financial Marketing and Management Association in London. Only three British companies turned up, contrasting strongly with the rest of Europe, which sent up to 40 delegates from each country. "Even the Andorranans are attending," squealed an organiser.

It would appear that the British knew what was coming. The unfortunate Continentals found themselves sitting through an ear-bashing from EMS Bossard, the consultants, who told them that financial institutions had no idea how to sell life products. British bancassurance already knew that.

Trenchant criticism of Cesar Pelli, the architect of the Canary Wharf tower, from an operative of Jaguar Building Services, the company that runs Britain's tallest office block. Some of the windowless storage rooms that are a feature of the tower's central spine do not have inside door handles – a discovery made by an unfortunate cleaner once the door had closed on him.

The poor fellow was posted missing, presumed dead, until someone heard screams (faint, but desperate) apparently emanating from the fabric of the building.

IN BRIEF

Glaxo shrugs off lower Zantac sales

Glaxo Wellcome shares shrugged off an annual meeting trading statement pointing to a 5 per cent decline in sales of Zantac, its best-selling ulcer treatment.

Analysts said the downturn was in line with expectations. Underlying growth of the combined company's other treatments was 8 per cent in the 10 months to October, according to Sir Colin Corness, chairman, who added that the integration with Wellcome was on track around the world.

Redrow hopeful of building upturn

Redrow, the housebuilder that came to market last year, blamed continuing difficult trading conditions on the last two Budgets and said a gradual return of confidence in the housing market would depend on this year's. Speaking at the company's annual meeting yesterday, Stephen Morgan, chairman, said a combination of industry rationalisation and improved purchaser confidence should improve the medium-term outlook.

Investment column, page 24

Rolls wins third airline order

Cathay Pacific became the third airline in five days to place an order with Rolls-Royce for its Trent engine. The value of Cathay's order, for two Airbus A330 aircraft, is £30m to Rolls. The planes will be delivered in the fourth quarter of next year.

Brake to buy Forte subsidiary

Brake Bros, the supplier of frozen foods to the UK catering industry, is to buy Puritan Maid, a subsidiary of Forte. Puritan is the principal food supplier to Forte's UK hotel and restaurant business and will continue to play that role for at least the next three years.

Maybourn in £5.3m rights call

Maybourn, the baby products, fabric dyes and florists sundries group, is raising £5.3m through a two-for-15 rights issue at 210p. The issue, fully underwritten by 3i Corporate Finance, will reduce the controlling Samuel family's stake from 60 per cent to 53 per cent.

Union attacks Wimpey/Tarmac asset swap

The Transport and General Workers Union hit out yesterday at the proposed asset swap between Wimpey and Tarmac, which a spokesman said underlined the failure of the Government to tackle the crisis in British construction.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Adams & Harvey (H)	27.3m (23.8m)	2.54m (2.82m)	30.8p (30.8p)	11p (8.5p)
Chelton Water (H)	3.13m (3.08m)	1.3m (1.23m)	7.3p (7.3p)	2.12p (1.95p)
Black Arrow (H)	10.5m (12.8m)	0.89m (1.13m)	2.25p (2.2p)	1p (1p)
Hardy Oil & Gas (H)	24.7m (25.1m)	0.51m (0.41m)	0.2p (0.2p)	0.2p (0.2p)
Incepta Group (H)	12.3m (9.1m)	-0.39m (0.25m)	-0.13p (0.25p)	0.2p (0.2p)

(P) - Final (H) - Interim (N) - Nine months

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market report/shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3,609.2 -1.6

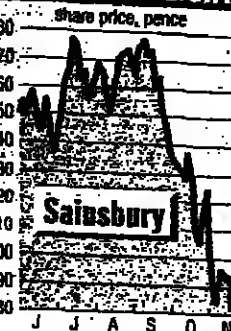
FT-SE 250
3,964.5 +3.7

FT-SE 350
1,793.9 -0.3

SEAQ VOLUME
684.5m shares,
35,552 bargains

Gifts Index
94.73 -0.19

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Superstore prices tumble as investors rush to check-outs

TAKING STOCK

Another rush for the superstore check-out was the highlight of a stock market struggling to enjoy its record-breaking burst.

Doubts have been multiplying about the sector's ability to hold margins as competition intensifies. Figures earlier this month from J Sainsbury came as an unpleasant surprise, underlining that the happy-go-lucky days of seemingly unstoppable progress were over.

There was talk of cautious investment comments being prepared but the only observations to surface emerged at Kleinwort Benson which took a bearish view of supermarkets in general and Sainsbury in particular.

Sainsbury fell 11p to 382p, the price has come down from 425p since the results and from a year's high of 479.5p.

Argyll, interim figures later this month, was cut 16p to

298p. Asda 4p to 99.5p and Tesco, which is seen gaining market share from Sainsbury, 12.5p to 283.5p.

The supermarket discomfort has to some extent been masked by the blue-chip exuberance that has driven many shares to new highs.

It is not only Sainsbury which seems to have moved beyond its investment sell-by date. Argyll has come down from 369p this year, Asda from 111p and Tesco 339p.

Others weak included Iceland, off 6p at 154p. Kwik Save 4p at 596p and Wm Morrison 4.5p to 146.5p.

The rest of the market had a subdued day, taking a breather after its exertions this week which lifted the FT-SE 100 index more than 80 points to Thursday's peak.

At one time Footsie was up 15.9 points to a trading high of 3,626.7. But the upsurge owed more to the expiry of the No-



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

member options contract, with two leading houses jockeying for position, then continuing investment buying.

Although the index finished 1.6 lower at 3,609.2, the market undertone remained confident. Talk of interest rate cuts is still in the air and many remain convinced New York's record-breaking run, despite some hesitancy, is far from over. The Budget remains a nagging influence. But recent Whitehall statistics have been encouraging.

Shell, reflecting an investment presentation and the market's acceptance of its Nigerian case, spurred 18.5p to 787.5p and London Electric-

ty's 100p dividend added 19p to 933p.

The inconclusive negotiations between South Wales Electricity and Welsh Water had little impact on the respective shares.

Sears, the retailer, stumbled 3p to 100p as Merrill Lynch joined the downgrading march, lowering its forecast £15m to £11.5m and saying sell.

Trading worries lowered Rexam, the packaging group, 13p to 47p and Zeneca lost a little of its glow, falling 17p to 1,290p as the alleged takeover stalker failed to appear.

The colder weather failed to help British Gas, off 4p at

237.5p, but possible construction savings of up to £150m lifted British Steel 3p to 166p.

Astec (BTR), the electronics group, moved ahead 6.5p to 150p after its presentation and Vickers, also on an investment

meeting, rose 3p to 260p. High-tech stocks produced some fun. Unipalm, ended 110p higher at 855p as the value of its US bid continued to increase. Firecrest, following another internet deal, gained 28p to 203p. The shares have surged from 67p last week.

MAID was caught by a delay in its US listing, falling 15p to 301p. Dealings are now likely to start on Tuesday.

Vero, an electronic parts maker, made a strong debut although there were muttering that the savage scaling down of applications had left some investors with unrealistically small shareholdings. Placed at 230p the shares reached 276.5p.

BICC made further headway, up 11p to 276p, on takeover talk and builder Redrow, said to be keen on Crest Nicholson, gained 3p to 128p.

Northern Leisure, a discotheque operator, reported "usefully" higher profits and rose 4p to a 96p peak.

Ariva, the oil group, jumped 10p to 53p on bid talks and Beverley, an engineer, held at 1.25p as it confirmed a cash-raising exercise to deal with a record rush of orders. It is raising £850,000 via a placing and open offer at 1.25p.

Profit warnings hit Enrodair, a car hire group, down 39p to 68p, and Epwin, a building materials group, 32p to 225p.

Era, the retailer, firmed to 9.75p after Greig Middleton forecast year's profits of £2m. Surrey Free Inns put on 3p to 113p with Teather & Greenwood suggesting profits of £1.3m this year.

□ Burford, the property group headed by Nigel Wray, gained 6p to 138.5p ahead of the demerger of its Trocadero operation. Dealings in the shares of the Piccadilly entertainment complex are due to start on 27 November. Burford shareholders will get Troc shares on a one-for-one ratio.

The property group will retain 29.5 per cent of the entertainment centre which cost Burford £96m last year and was valued at £115m in September.

□ CPL Aromas, a maker of flavourings and fragrances, has moved ahead this month, anticipating interim figures. The shares gained a further 3p to 355p, making a 40p improvement. They were floated at 150p in June last year. The interim profit is likely to be around £1.3m against £930,000.

SHARE PRICE DATA

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grown up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: ex rights x Ex-dividend x Ex-all x Unlisted Securities Market x Suspended x Partly Paid x Nil Paid Shares.

Source: Financial Times

THE INDEPENDENT INDEX

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from Seaq. Simply dial 0891 123 335, followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 1233 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

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UK Stock Market Report 01 Bullion Report 05 Water Shares 30

UK Company News 02 Wall St Report 30 Electricity Shares 40

Foreign Exchange 03 Tokyo Market 31 High Street Banks 41

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For assistance, call our helpline 071 877 4375 (9.30am - 5.30pm).

Call cost 70p per minute (including VAT), and 40p at all other times. Call charges include VAT.

MARKET LEADERS: TOP 20 VOLUMES

(at 1750pm)

BTR 2402m BT 802m Sainsbury J 622m

Seam 1344m British Gas 794m

Harco 1104m TSB 794m

Prax Corp 817m Tesco 686m

Volodent 654m Shell 622m

Asda 605m British Steel 622m

FT-SE 100 INDEX hour by hour

Open 3609.2 up 0.4 14.00 3609.2 down 0.0

08.00 3609.2 up 0.4 15.00 3607.1 down 2.1

10.00 3614.5 up 5.3 16.00 3603.3 down 1.6

11.00 3614.5 up 5.3 17.00 3603.3 down 1.6

12.00 3607.1 down 2.8

13.00 3605.0 down 2.8

14.00 3603.3 down 1.6

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Report
INTERNATIONAL RUGBY
England

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Robinson
rejoices
long ru

Twickenham rev
new look to the



LEE DIXON - FACT FILE
Age: 31
Joined Arsenal: July 86
Cost: £400,000
Appearances: 352 (3sub)



STEVE BOULD - FACT FILE
Age: 29
Joined Arsenal: Jan 84
Cost: apprentice
Appearances: 463 (5)



TONY ADAMS - FACT FILE
Age: 33
Joined Arsenal: June 88
Cost: £390,000
Appearances: 251 (11)



NIGEL WINTERBURN - FACT FILE
Age: 31
Joined Arsenal: May 87
Cost: £407,000
Appearances: 381 (1)

The Highbury Four: the case for a defence

After donkey's years of success, Arsenal's misery back four are still together and still cleaning up against all comers as the side is rebuilt by Bruce Rioch. Glenn Moore tackles the supreme offside trap

There have been some very unlikely Highbury tales told in the last few weeks but the Independent can today exclusively reveal the most unexpected claim of them all. Arsenal do not play an offside trap.

So asserts Lee Dixon who, together with Tony Adams, Steve Bould and Nigel Winterburn, has formed arguably the most impregnable defence in the game, and easily the most enduring unit in the top division. In an inappropriate phrase, they have been together for donkey's years.

It is just over seven years, an extraordinary record of longevity in game of such flux. Of the 76 other defenders who lined up in the (then) First Division on the quarter's first day as a unit, 27 August 1988, only a dozen remain with their clubs, and two of those have played with other teams in the interim. During this time the Arsenal back four have been collectively vilified for being boring and individually accused of not being good enough. Yet they have all played for England and have been the bulwark of a side which has won two championships, the FA and League cups, and the European Cup-Winners' Cup. Not bad for a group that cost just over a million.

The arrival of Bruce Rioch in the summer was thought to herald their break up. Instead, while Rioch has sought to overhaul the personnel and philosophy of the attacking players, the defence (after an uncertain couple of years) is playing as well as ever. So well in fact that they go into today's south London derby having conceded six goals in the last 15 games of the season.

Tottenham possess one of the most thoughtful centre-forwards in the Premiership and one prospect is inevitable. At regular intervals Adams will raise his arm, the linesman will put up his flag, and Teddy Sheringham will be offside.

However, Dixon said: "We don't play offside; it is not a trap. It is just organisation. Because we have played together so long, we know there are certain areas of the pitch we do not go into and, if a forward makes a run which the back four think is a silly one, we will just hold the line and let him run offside."

"You never see us all run up towards the half-way line like the old Milan trick. But I can see that it looks as if we play offside when four of us are all stood in a line with our hands in the air. There have been a lot of jokes about that - like the Arsenal Subbuteo team with the back four having their hands in the air."

Dixon was the third member of the quartet to arrive at Highbury. Only Adams was there when George Graham took over as manager from Don Howe in the summer of 1986. Adams, a former apprentice, had progressed slowly after making his debut three seasons earlier. Now, at 19, Graham put him alongside David O'Leary, Viv Andersson and Kenny Sansom, three experienced internationals. Adams played every game, was capped by England and voted PFA Young Player of the Year.

But though that defence was tight, it was also growing old, and within

the next year, Graham bought Winterburn from Wimbledon and Dixon and Bould from Stoke. Total cost: £1,197,000, less than Sansom alone had cost six years earlier.

"Mr Graham took a gamble signing us and I would like to think it paid off," said Dixon at the club's London Colney training ground. "We clicked straight away and we won the League in our first season." Two years later, Arsenal won the title again conceding just 18 goals and keeping 24 clean sheets in 38 League games.

"The secret," Tony Adams said, "is hard work." Brian Marwood, who was at the club during the first success, agrees. He recalled: "George would work them for half an hour to three-quarters on their own every day. He put a tremendous amount of effort into getting them to work as a unit."

Graham would then play attackers v defenders and, Marwood recalls, the defenders usually won. "It would be loaded in our favour; we would be six against their four. We had a good forward line - David Rocastle, Alan Smith, Paul Marston and myself - but we would struggle to break them down. He got them into a frame of mind in which it was a sin to concede a goal in training. They

then carried that attitude on to the pitch."

"When he formulated the back four, George signed players people may have questioned at the time. But they had different strengths and they complemented each other. Any defensive unit relies on its communication and theirs is tremendous. Better than anyone around."

Between them the back four have played nearly 1,500 games for Arsenal. As a unit they have played together 171 times - keeping 74 clean sheets, and conceding 137 goals. Contrast that to England, who have fielded 10 different back fours in 14 games under Terry Venables. No wonder Adams snorted when he was asked at Bisham Abbey this week if they were developing a similar understanding to that he had at Arsenal.

When Rioch arrived at Highbury he sat down with the incumbent staff, Stewart Houston and Steve Burtonshaw, and talked about the team. "They said to me 'Whatever you do, do not change the back four. When I began to work with the players I could see they were right. They were well organised and I had to build a team around that.'"

"Any new manager starts from the back," Marwood added. "I am sure

Brice has been delighted to inherit a back four to build around. He has been able to try and create fluency and excitement on the rock of the defensive unit. The four are very good at getting tight on people, they never give them time to turn and run at them. Tony is not frightened of the space behind him if he goes in short. He knows the others are there to cover. You rarely see much distance between them."

The central pair are very commanding and very competitive, but they are also very mobile. Tony leads by example, he is inspirational. He has come through a lot of abuse and showed a lot of character. He over knows when he is beaten, you see him winning tackles and headers all over the pitch and it stimulates other players. He could do that even when he was young."

Nigel Winterburn is a defender first and foremost. He likes to play with a left-winger in front of him so he can pass and sit. He is very good defensively, one of the most underrated in the Premiership. Lee Dixon's strengths are different. He is very competent defensively but he likes to get forward. Arsenal have not used traditional wingers on the right because he gives them that option."

"Bould and Adams have also

scored and made their share of goals, especially with the emphasis Arsenal put on set-pieces. I can remember taking corners, Steve would flick them on and there would be Tony, diving in head first among the flailing boots."

Indeed only four players have scored more than Adams' 28 goals during this period: Bould, meanwhile, has seen off a string of centre-halves: David O'Leary, Gus Caesar, Andy Linighan, Colin Pates and Martin Keown. Some have had their moments. Linighan replaced the injured Bould during the FA and League Cup successes of 1993, even scoring the winner in the FA Cup final. O'Leary played in much of the first title season, often as a sweeper behind Adams and Bould.

The quartet have had to adapt to various changes. "People said the pass-back rule would cause us problems but I cannot imagine playing without it now," Dixon said. "When you watch it happening on the old Match of the Days it even drives me mad." Then there was the change in the offside law which, added, Dixon. "Just means we have to be more careful."

More teams are playing with one striker up and another off. A new problem? No, said Adams. "Liverpool did

it with Kenny Dalglish and Ian Rush. In that situation do you push one on and leave Ian Rush, with his back against the other centre-half? We decided to keep our shape, the four."

Then there are the new tactics. "We do not care what anyone says," said David Seaman, the goalkeeper. "They fly all over the place and we have had to work on closing people down much further out."

"What's the matter with him? He can stop them," responded Adams before confirming that was the case.

In recent years it has been the European campaigns which have often seen the Arsenal defence at its best, notably against Parma in the 1994 final and at Auxerre last year. "We were battered for 90 minutes at Auxerre," Dixon recalled. "That sort of performance gives you a lot of satisfaction - although I would rather win 2-0 every week. It was not just the back four, we had a lot of defence in front of us. That is when a team shows it has good team spirit."

They were equally resolute in Arsenal's last game during which Manchester United were kept at bay. Dennis Bergkamp afterwards described the defence as the best he had played with while Alex Ferguson noted: "The defence is still Arsenal's cornerstone, their great strength." David Platt added: "They are the main reason I came here. I knew the defence gave the club a good base."

It is largely a working relationship. "It is difficult to get together socially as we live all over the place," Adams said, "but the boss is into camaraderie, so occasionally pop out together."

Their average age is now 31. How long can they go on for? Doo Howe, one of the game's leading coaches, said: "Their sell-by date is a long way off yet. They will be good for this season, and a couple more."

Good news for Arsenal, but bad news for forwards and linesmen.

Leeds wrestle with a welcome problem

How to honour an arriving Swede? Middlesbrough's fans had it easy when their boy from Brazil, Juninho, made his appearance - don the sombrero, cue samba bands, nothing too tricky. Leeds United's supporters may need to think a bit harder about their welcome for Tomas Broin, the club's record £4.5m signing, who will be presented to them at today's home match against Chelsea.

Volvo? Smorgasbords? Perhaps they will simply sing something by Abba - "Money, Money, Money" would do nicely in the circumstances.

The Swede's transfer from Parma, all off according to his agent three days ago, has finally

gone through, following a late hitch over the paying-off of Broin's Italian contract, which had seven months to run.

A delay in registration means that Leeds supporters will have to wait before they see whether Broin, who has failed to earn a regular place in Parma's team since breaking an ankle last season, can link up as expected with the predatory Tony Yeboah.

"I am not on top form now, but I hope to be in a month," Broin said yesterday. "I hope you respect that and then I will show you what kind of player I am."

Another member of the Premiership's foreign legion, the Romanian international Dan Petrescu, has his chance to show

Mike Rowbottom on the weekend's Premiership action

Chelsea's following what kind of player he is as he makes his debut following his £2.5m move from Sheffield Wednesday.

Other overseas players also face challenging afternoons - Dennis Bergkamp experiences his first north London derby when he lines up for Arsenal against Tottenham at White Hart Lane, and the Aston Villa striker Savo Milosevic, who has played two midweek internationals in four days, needs to rally himself to face the Premiership leaders, Newcastle,

for whom Peter Beardsley, now 34, will be making his 650th League appearance.

Beardsley's midweek experience for England was the ultimate in frustration - he was recalled from the touchline after Terry Venables reconsidered his decision to bring him on as a substitute. But the evening was hardly less unsatisfactory for Liverpool's Jamie Redknapp, whose sixth-minute departure from the field with a hamstring injury precludes him from the Merseyside derby at Anfield.

Stan Collymore, who has kissed and made up with the club following his outburst in a magazine, has also been forced out of contention because of his

mother's sudden illness. Good auguries, perhaps, for Everton, who have not won here since 1987.

Juninho, meanwhile, has had his first taste of the English winter, braving freezing conditions in training and, according to Boro's assistant manager, Viv Anderson, taking it in his stride. On a day when even the player-manager, Bryan Robson, wore gloves, the Brazilian did not. He did, however, opt for tracksuit bottoms.

Considering Middlesbrough's opposition today, he would be well advised to keep them on - he has his first meeting with Wimbledon's Crazy Gang at Selhurst Park.

England seeded for Euro 96

England, the hosts for next summer's European Championship, have been confirmed as one of the four seeded teams.

Uefa's Committee for the European Championship, meeting in Geneva yesterday, announced that England will be seeded along with the holders, Denmark, and Germany and Spain, who have been nominated because of their superior playing records during the qualifying campaigns for last year's World Cup and Euro 96.

England have been placed in Group A, which will be contested in London and Birmingham, although the hosts will play all their group games at Wembley.

Aston Villa v Newcastle

Johnson is given his third start of the season by Villa after missing as a substitute in the 4-1 win at West Ham a fortnight ago. Middlesbrough's Clark is given his first start after missing the last three matches and is likely to start in place of Watson.

Blackburn v Nottingham Forest

Berg is likely to take the place of injured centre-half Pearce at the heart of the Blackburn defence, with Kenyon filling in at right-back. Winger Ripley is fit to return. England hero Stone is expected to shake off a slight Achilles tendon injury to take his place in an unchanged line-up for Forest.

Bolton v West Ham

Bolton are considering using recent 21m Yugoslav signing Curcio in a free role in midfield. Lutetian De Freitas is set to deputise for Finnish striker Pustelainen, who has failed to recover from a groin strain. West Ham replace the suspended Dicks with Rowland.

Leeds v Chelsea

With new signing Broin a spectator, left-back Domingo returns after a five-match absence in place of Penberthy, who is suspended. Spurs are expected to recover from an ankle injury. Chelsea have an injury crisis, with nine players out, including Gullit, Stanger and new signing Priebe.

Liverpool v Everton

Collymore's return for Liverpool could be delayed after his mother was rushed to hospital. Manchester will start in place of the injured Redknapp, who limped off in England's match against Switzerland on Wednesday. Joe Hoyle has an unchanged Everton side.

Manchester United v Southampton

Suspensions mean changes for both sides, with Keane - out until Christmas - and Neil - out until Christmas.

TEAM NEWS

mas as he recovers from a hernia operation - starting a four-match ban for United and Southampton without the Tisserand, who serves a one-match ban. Because of Keane's absence, McClair, Shearer and Beardsley are in contention.

Sheffield Wed v Manchester City

Ingenious, £1m departure to Italian club Bari last week, his left manager, the Tisserand, who serves a one-match ban. Because of Keane's absence, McClair, Shearer and Beardsley are in contention.

Tottenham v Arsenal

Spurs are expected to include Sheringham despite the striker picking up a slight strain in England's 3-1 win over Switzerland. Middlesbrough should struggle off a slight injury. Arsenal replace the suspended Dicks with Rowland.

Wimbledon v Middlesbrough

Shanks could be in Wimbledon's line-up after a knee injury but Fitzgibbon and Peet are suspended. Reeves could return after recovering from a thigh strain. Middlesbrough are giving fitness checks to player-manager Robson, Beardsley and Dicks.

TOMORROW

Queen's Park Rangers have an injury doubt hanging over Sinclair, who returned from England duty with a knock sustained in training. Middlesbrough's left-winger and full-back Beardsley are both beginning suspensions. Coventry expect to give a debut to 21m signing Shaw and are boosted by the return of goalkeeper Ogilvie.

It wasn't pretty, but it did at least allow the grass to grow back across the middle of the pitch, and it did bring victories

FAN'S EYE VIEW No 120 READING BRIAN CODLING

our "nearby" seasons, who we almost avoided relegation back to the Fourth Division, that Robert Maxwell decided that by merging Reading and Oxford United he could create a new "super" team in the south. Strange chap, Maxwell...

But success was not far off. Ian Branfoot brought his brand of "long ball" football to Elm Park. It wasn't pretty, but it did at least allow the grass to grow back across the middle of the pitch, and it did bring victories.

We won promotion again and then walked away with the Third Division title. Revenge, at last, for all those years of schoolboy torment.

We managed two seasons in the Second before sliding back a division, where we felt more comfortable. But relegation year also saw us at Wembley, Michael Gilkes' final penalty of a shoot-out against Coventry sent us towards the twin towers for the Simod Cup final.

Not by any means a Mickey Mouse Cup. No - Simod was the competition to win in 1988 and Reading duly won it: 4-1 against mighty Luton. Town (well, they were in the old First Division then). Reading had won at Wembley - and in my lifetime. The pleasure of that somehow made the following seasons of Third Division football bearable again.

We had, however, tasted the good life, and we were to taste it again. We raced away with the Second Division title and, for the third time in 120 years, we were in the second highest division in the league. Season upon season of chasing rare victories at Scunthorpe, Hartlepool and Mansfield were replaced with one glorious year of success. We beat Middles-

brough away, we hammered Wolves at home, in front of real television cameras and, in the final game, we defeated Charlton to finish second.

In any season other than the last, Reading would have won promotion. We would have been playing in the Premier League. As it was, we had to fight through the play-offs. 3-0 to Tranmere we won 3-0 and in a dull second leg we look around Elm Park in preparation for the visits of Manchester United and Liverpool.

Wembley - for a second time. Within 20 minutes Reading were 2-0 up. It was almost unbelievable. But the hubbub burst and, horrifyingly, Bolton hit back to win 4-3. Even now, it is hard to bear...

Bruno happy at Hearts

Scottish football

The Hearts manager, Jim Jeffries, yesterday completed the signings of his three-man foreign legion until the end of the season. The French goalkeeper Gilles Rousset, the Italian defender Pasquale Bruno and the Swedish striker, Hans Ekstrand, are preparing for their first Edinburgh derby tomorrow against Hibernian at Tynecastle.

Bruno, the former Juventus and Torino defender, has impressed in a three-match trial

and has accepted a contract to stay at Tynecastle until the end of the 1996/97 season. "I like Edinburgh and the Hearts fans have been very good to me since I came here," he said.

Hearts are likely to be without the Scotland defender Dave McPherson while Hibs have injury worries over the forwards Keith Wright and Kevin Harper, but Andy Millen could return after a knee injury for Alex Miller's side. Tomorrow is also derby day in Glasgow, with Celtic travelling to Ibrox to face the champions, Rangers.

Gascoigne too mu

Becker his sun just rig

England reach

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

Dut ed Hockey

Sho

Independent Weekend



WATERWORLD

New York: a city on the edge

page 19

Photograph: Colorific

INSIDE STORIES

2 Dear Mr Broccoli, It's probably harping on a lost cause in these times of political correctness, but to my aged tastes there simply aren't enough bikini-clad lovelies draped around the sets of the latest Bond... Yours, M (Retd.)

60 Jamie Freeman had a problem with foxes – one year he lost 30 to 40 lambs. Then he bought a llama. 'After that I didn't get any problems. If a fox comes into the field the llama will scare him away by staring him out. Or by spitting at him'

3 Randy Newman recalls the 'Short People' tour. 'Midgets picketed me. I got death threats. I played 3,000 seaters in front of 300 people. Managers would try to console you, saying a lot of people showed later, or there were a lot in the grassy knoll area'

60 Roy Conway went along the queue offering croissants to those at the front who had been waiting in line for at least two days. What was the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that had enticed them and 2,500 others to the former GLC offices that weekend?

ARTS & BOOKS

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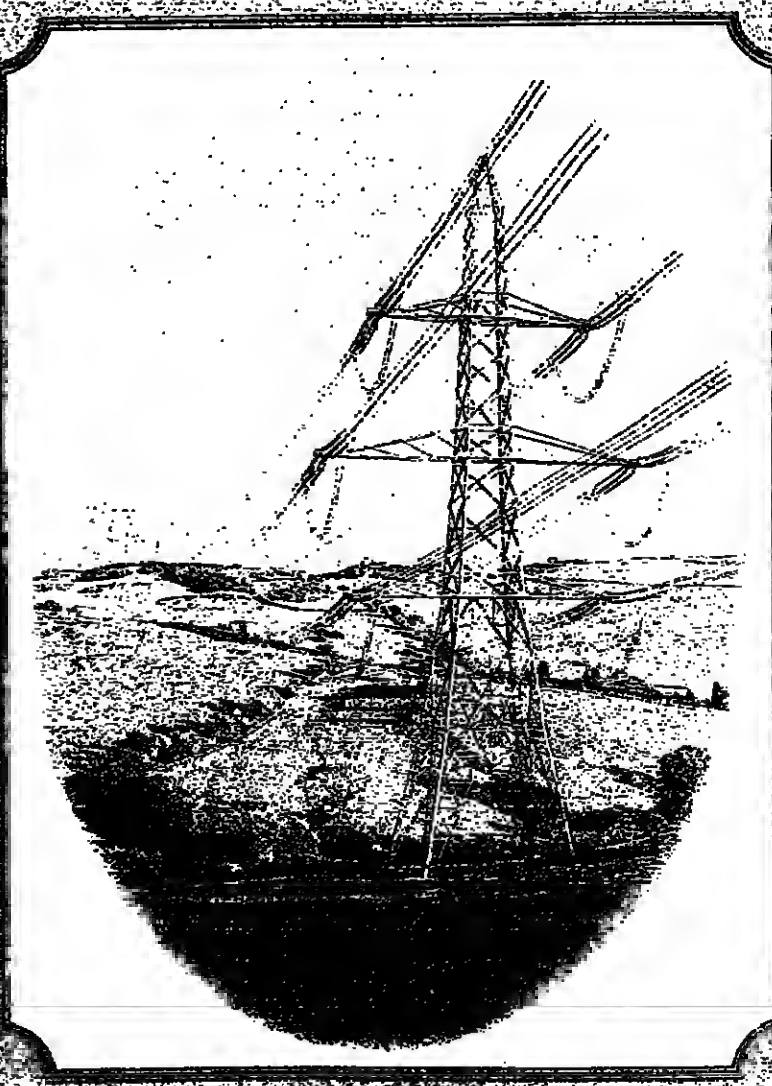
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THE GREAT DAYS OF DECAPIERE FOREST

MANY THINGS HAVE GONE FOR A BURTON THESE DAYS - BUT THANKFULLY NOT IN BURTON. MARSTON'S PEDIGREE REMAINS THE GOLDEN FINT IT WAS IN GOOD OLD JOHN MARSTON'S DAY, BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY BEER STILL BREWED IN WOODEN CASKS.



Arts and Books

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INSIDE STORIES

Brave heart



Diana Rigg returns to the National in triumph with 'Mother Courage' page 4

Sellars beware

The director critics love to hate makes his debut at Covent Garden page 5

Public dancer
Dickie Fantastic gets his moment with Tina Turner page 5

Tsar man
So who did kill the Russian imperial family? page 6

Short cuts
Everything you ever wanted to know about 'Crime and Punishment' page 6

Private lives
Philip Hoare on untangling the life from the legend of Noel Coward page 7

"The number of visitors is not important. It's the quality of the visit that is my concern," Dr Alan Borg, director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, was reported as being on the verge of saying the other day. My apologies for the clumsiness of that sentence, but the chronology of modern news management can make these things tricky. Dr Borg hasn't made this remark yet - he's only written it in an article for *Antique Collector* which is "to be published". Then again, perhaps the warning that he's going to say it counts as a statement in itself, in which case we can stop messing about and get on with business. Unless of course, having had a preview in print of what he's about to say, he decides he's going to change his mind.

I hope not, because at first glance there is something

What price two million visitors if they all move through the galleries in that dutiful touristic shambles that can afflict the best of us? Why not test the buggers before you let them in?

magnificently patrician about Dr Borg's remark, which was made in the context of a discussion about admission charges at the V&A (he mentioned the figure of £10). The blood rises a little at the prospect of such reckless disregard for the niceties of democratic discourse, which usually prefers a mandate of large numbers. Instead of gabbling about "access" and "outreach", Dr Borg raises the issue of quality. Instead of standing at the door of the V&A with a little clicking counter, effectively reducing the antic parade of humanity to a stream of units, he insists on discrimination.

If you look closely, you can see that even this bold spirit has flinched from the full implications of his remark: he is rhetorically consistent, the concluding sentence should read, "It's the quality of the visitors that is my concern".



Tom

But he understandably shies from such unadorned expression and uses the word "visit" instead.

There's a certain attraction to the thought, anyway. What price two million visitors if they all move through the galleries in that dutiful touristic shambles that can afflict the best of us in museums? Indeed, why stop at a £10 entrance fee (which would certainly sharpen the concentration of most museum-goers). Why not test the buggers before you let them in? After having laid down the entrance fee, prospective visitors would be required to fill in a short multiple-choice paper along the following lines.

1 A flabellum is: a an ornamental stomacher used for ceremonial armour; b a

liturgical fan used to keep flies off the Sacraments; c a medieval aid to weight loss.

2 The name Chippendale is associated with: a 18th-century furniture; b 19th-century porcelain; c 20th-century torsos.

3 What would you do with a *canapé à confidant*? a store jewellery in it; b sit on it; c eat it.

4 Pronounce the words *cloisonné*, *faience*, *intaglio*.

5 Scroll moulding is: a a fungus affecting old parchments; b a scroll-shaped ornament; c ornamental brickwork from the factory of Herbert Scroll (1867-1932).

6 One of these is not a pottery. Which one? a Zeitz; b Zerbst; c Zanesville; d Zuccaro.

7 If you saw a reference to an inro box, would you think

it was: a Bakelite; b Japanese lacquer; c a misprint.

8 Complete the following sentence in no less than 10 words: I deserve to visit the Victoria and Albert Museum because...

Potential visitors who failed to gain any marks at all would be turned away, politely but firmly. Their £10 application fee would be non-refundable. However, visitors who answered some questions correctly would receive a proportionate amount of their money back. Visitors who got all the answers correct and whose declared motives also satisfied the admission staff would receive a full refund and be given a large fluorescent badge with the motto "I'm a precious object - handle with care". In this way, the atmosphere of the museum could be transformed. Gone would be the

dutiful trudge of tourist hordes, "doing" another of the sights. Gone would be the raucous clamour of schoolchildren visiting the Sockshop Gallery of Hosiery.

Yes, there would be fewer visitors, but the quality of their experience would be greatly refined. Little would disturb the reverential, scholarly hush of the galleries but the occasional thump of a falling body, as a visitor succumbed to Stendhal's Syndrome and fainted under the exquisite pressure of aesthetic contemplation. It's true that the door would have been closed to those poor in education or money; that the free opportunity to be lifted above the ordinary might have gone. But you have to make sacrifices if you want quality.

Answers: 1 b; 2 a; 3 b; 5 b; 6 d; 7 b. See 'Exit Poll' below.

To: Albert Cubby Broccoli
Producer of: 'Goldeneye'

From: Admiral Sir Miles
Messervy RN (Retd)

Ref: Cdr. James Bond (007)

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

Without wishing to disparage the valiant and patriotic efforts of my successors to the post of "M", I feel that this latest effort of yours, to wit *Goldeneye*, serves mainly as a reminder of a phrase once dropped into the public consciousness by a Miss Carly Simon, that "nobody does it better".

As with many other artifacts of British popular culture (Dr Who, Beatles LPs, political sex scandals, fab gear), the James Bond film reached its evolutionary high point in the mid-1960s, and attempts to prolong its commercial life beyond this date should be viewed with scepticism. Let's face it, Cubs, none of us is getting any younger: post-imperial malaise, post-Cold War drabness and the deadening hand of John Major have rendered all revivals of Britain's past glories at best camp and at worst dire embarrassments.

Points That Should Be Considered Before Undertaking Further Missions on the Pattern of *Goldeneye*:

1 To start with the obvious, no Bond film worth its Double-O rating should star anyone but Sean Connery circa 1963. While Mr Brosnan certainly fails to plumb the depths of Messervy's *Big Tam*, to be fair, Sean Connery circa anytime between *You Only Live Twice* and *Never Say Never Again* suffers from exactly the same inability to compete with his younger self that has so troubled his successors, all of whom - as is sadly evident in chase scenes - run like girls. If further missions are to ensue, Mr Brosnan will need to return to GCHQ for a refresher course in surveillance technique, to RADA for a top-up in eyebrow-raising and off-the-cuff quipping and to Savile Row for instruction in the wearing of fine clothes.

2 Opening credits. Mr Brosnan is certainly up to the demands of posing with a gun in a blood-filled iris, and it gives me pleasure to commend the title sequence of *Goldeneye* as exactly the mix of Pop-art surrealism and naked lady silhouettes that made these pre-video-nuff illustrated songs such an essential part of the sexual education of Sixties schoolboys. However, in the absence of Shirley Bassey, Tina Turner and this Bono fellow just won't do. The art of selecting a performer to belt out the Bond title song is to find someone who perfectly encapsulates the tastes of the exact month the film is released but seems unutterably naff and passé by the time it makes its cable TV debut: sterling examples are Matt Monro, Nancy Sinatra, Wings, Sheena Easton, Rita Coolidge, Duran Duran and, of course, a-ha. Miss Turner, it seems, is quite likely still to have a career when *Goldeneye* makes its network TV debut, which lets down the side more than a tad.

3 Bond Girls. It's probably harping on a lost cause in these times of political correctness, but, to my aged tastes, there simply aren't enough bikini-clad lovelies draped around the sets of the latest Bond. If I haven't missed something, Bond only actually has explicit sex with the heroine, which is fairly feeble compared with the bedpost-notching even the early Roger Moore managed. And no, Judi Dench does not count, any more than Lottie Lenya did.

Izabella Scorupco and Famke Janssen, however, are vintage stuff: equipped with real names almost as silly as their screen cognomens, they emerge from the requisite international obscurity and seem to bid fair to prove a match in their fleeting kisses of fame with Ursula Adams, Daniela Bianchi, Claudine Auger, Milla Farrow, Barbara Bach, Lois Chiles, Maud Adams, Tanya Roberts and Talisa Soto. Ms Janssen, however, shows a deal too much acting ability and humour: it would be a shame if she were to break the mould by being the only Bond girl to capitalise on her debut and go on to do other notable work. Honor Blackman and Diana Rigg don't count, because they were successful Avengers before their Bond

outings, and don't mention Jane Seymour or Britt Ekland. If there is an element of *Goldeneye* that can be reckoned entirely satisfactory it is the aforementioned Ms Janssen's showing in the traditional role of Villain's Girlfriend, previously taken by the ladies fed to piranhas or dogs in *You Only Live Twice* and *Moonraker*, but also taking on sterling additional duties with her thigh-crushing assassinations, which qualify her for the equally traditional part of Villain's Gimmick Sidekick, as represented by Oddjob from *Goldfinger* or Jaws from *The Spy Who Loved Me*. The jury is still out on whether Xenia Onatopp is an exotic enough character-babe name in the Fleming mould (Pussy Galore, Honey Rider), or merely silly, prompting more fitters than purrs.

4 The Villain. It is here that *Goldeneye* is most sorely lacking. Though he has a megatomanic alac scheme to make a huge profit while reducing the industrial world to anarchy, and a personal grudge against 007, Sean Bean's Janus just isn't up there with the likes of Dr No, Auric Goldfinger or Ernst Blofeld. For one thing, he is too spartan in his personal tastes; how can we make a spendthrift Martini-swiller in a posh car seem sympathetic unless he is up against a multi-millionaire ostentatious enough to hollow out a volcano, paint Shirley Eaton with real gold, own a famously stolen real painting or keep a nuclear reactor in the garden. Plus, that lightly corrugated scar isn't deformed enough to compete with Joseph Wiseman's metal hands or Donald Pleasence's bald hunch.

5 Other Features. It is our pleasure to commend you for taking care to include a bacchanal session at Monte Carlo; some mild flirting with Miss Moneybags; the correct recipe for a vodka Martini; a chase involving an Aston Martin; a comedy scene with doddery old Desmond; Llewellyn saying, "Now, look here 007" as extras self-destruct in the background; experimental gadgets which just happen to be specifically useful in a tight spot; and an underground secret base which can be spectacularly blown up for the big finish. Indeed, if it weren't for a decided shortage in the bikini-extra department, this might almost be a perfect simulation of the old Bond (Brosnan excepted).

6 Topicality. Let's face it, Cubby, all this attempt to keep up with the post-Cold War world is a bit embarrassing. And didn't you do it in *The Spy Who Loved Me*, with its KGB heroine, if not in *From Russia with Love*. Bond's expense account lifestyle seems out of place in the cutback-driven 1990s - the silliest moment in *Goldeneye* comes when Judi Dench has to get approval for Bond's mission from a Prime Minister we have to assume is drab old ditherer John Major, though Major would actually be too intimidated by a stern lady like Dame Judi to put up any resistance, and most of the rest of the Michaels in his cabinet have been auditioning for the role of the Michaels in years. However, considering 007 first spied for England in the austere 1950s, when rationing and carbolic were the order of the day, he could hardly be accused of ever being in touch with reality.

In conclusion, I should have to think most carefully before recommending a renewal of your Double-O license. There will certainly have to be a greater effort in the procurement of swimwear models and dastardly foreigners and it would do your cause no harm at all to pop back to 1963 in a Tardis and regenerate Sean Connery.

I remain very faithfully yours,

M.
Signed in his absence by
KIM NEWMAN



Royal National Theatre

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by Ernst Toller
in a version by Ashley Dukes

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6.7.30pm & continuing

NT
NATIONAL THEATRE

exit poll

How much would you pay to go to the V&A?

Alan Borg, the new director of the V&A, suggests that most visitors could afford a £10 entry fee. We put this to people visiting the museum this week (for free)

Mrs Simons, retired, Elstree:
£10 is worth it, but I don't think that the majority of people can afford it. There are other museums to go to, and I'm afraid they'll outprice themselves.

Mr Grant, 29, traveller, South Africa:
I suppose it depends on your interests, but just a normal traveller or normal tourist who is not especially interested in art is not going to pay. About £4 is OK for admission, and less for students.

Ruth Lovegrove, 19, student, Cardiff:
It's worth £10 on the basis of what I've just seen, but they're already taking that off us in taxes, so I wouldn't be prepared to pay that, especially as a student. I think it's best just giving donations: I'd give a donation, but if it was demanded I wouldn't agree with it, because it's heritage and we should be able to see it for nothing.

Oliver White, 17, sixth-former, Devon:
I wouldn't pay £10. I wouldn't pay the price they suggest here as a donation, £4.50, myself. I would have thought £2.50 was about normal; that's what they've charged at most of the other galleries I've been to, and this one isn't my favourite at all.

Lesley Griggs, floral designer, Gloucester:
I honestly don't think you should have to pay for museums. I would pay, personally, but I think there are people who can't afford £10 admission. I think maybe up to £5, with a reduction for children, might be acceptable.

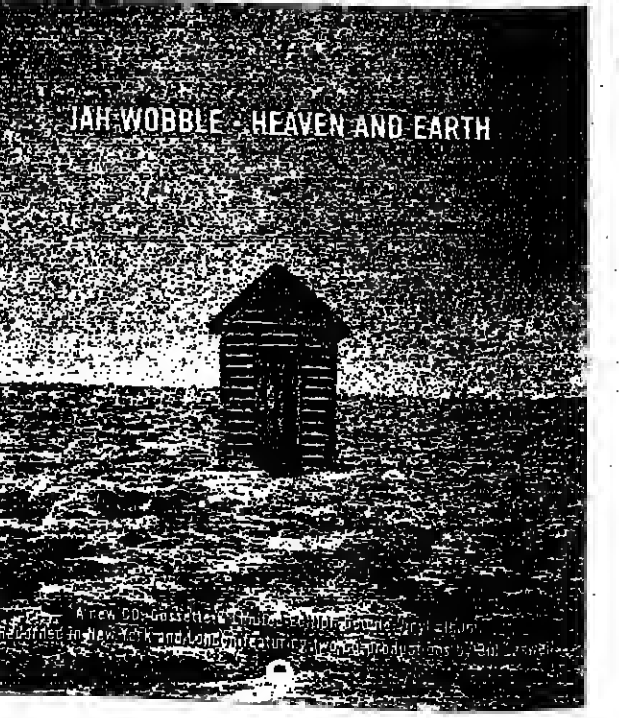
Mark Campbell, 36, businessman, London:
Though it's probably worth paying, maybe this is what they should be using some of the lottery money for. I often come here, but I would not really be happy if they were to start charging; I would certainly cut down on the number of visits I make.

Graham Taylor, 40, airport employee, Heathrow:
It offers everything to everybody, particularly the student, but I think £10 is a bit excessive. I would say about £5, £5.50, but I can remember coming here with my father and getting in for free, though you could make a donation. I think this is free enterprise going a little bit too far.

Wendy Hanford, 45, housewife, Haywards Heath:
For what's actually in there I expect that it's quite reasonable to have to pay, but I doubt ordinary people living around London could afford it. £10 is way too much per visit.

Luke Arpidge, 58, company president, USA:
I'd be happy to pay £10 to see what I've seen, and I think most tourists would, though I guess people living locally would object.

Interviews by Scott Hughes



09/11/2015

Cheeky devil

Don Henley as Faust. Elton John as an angel. James Taylor as God. Randy Newman, the songwriter once picketed by midgets, has made the funniest album in years.

By Giles Smith

In a career lasting more than a quarter of a century, the American composer Randy Newman has overthrown many of our most cherished notions about what it is to be a singer-songwriter. On his records, he has never been relentlessly confessional or bracingly intimate. He has never stared out at us mournfully from an album sleeve, dressed heavily in corduroy and velvet and alone, except for, perhaps, a wine glass or a French newspaper. He has rarely sung to us in his own voice. His songs sit him inside the characters of others, many of whom have unpleasant things to say – about their wives, about people from other races, about, most famously, short people. In some respects, Randy Newman's whole life in the music business could be read as one long preparation for his most recent step, which is to play the Devil.

This happens on Newman's latest record, *Randy Newman's Faust*, no less than a comic take on Goethe, with an all-star cast (James Taylor, Bonnie Raitt, Elton John, Linda Ronstadt and so forth). In London to promote this unlikely item, Newman sits, rather incongruously, in a hot and astonishingly creaky hotel room, wearing a white open-necked shirt, black trousers and expensive-looking shoes. Equally incongruous, an electric piano has been installed for him, in among the repro furnishings. Newman's voice is loud and still bears traces of his New Orleans origins (he refers to one of his five children as "my eldest boy"). He laughs frequently and noisily, but normally at fairly black things. Greil Marcus, in his great essay on Newman in the book *Mystery Train*, used the phrase "slot-mouthed", which is just right for the slightly combative tension in Newman's lips as he sings and also as he talks.

"A straight 'I love you'," Newman says, "is almost beyond me, whether because of shyness or honesty. Nevertheless, stuff I do sounds like me for the most part. This album [*Faust*] feels like the true me all around. Obviously I'm writing for character so it isn't my sentiments always. But so what? Why does it have to be a psychoanalytic medium where you're spilling your guts? No one does anyway. People forget it's showbusiness."

People forget a lot of things, when it comes to Randy Newman records. Like no one else's, his career is strung through with large-scale misunderstandings.

His hymn to Los Angeles, "I Love L.A.," with its merciless celebration of the city's most distasteful locations ("Santa Monica Boulevard! We love it!") was taken up proudly as the campaign song for the Los Angeles Olympics. A decade later, LA DJs still spin it for drivers, a song so breezy, you barely notice what you're breezing past. ("Look at those cars, look at those trees, look at that bum, man, be's down on his knees.")

Then there was "Short People", a piece of blunt bigotry, set to a mildly insidious piano riff. "Short people," as Newman famously put it, "got no reason to live." This would be a very different song if Newman himself were short; it would have an altogether less dizzying satirical spin. It might even come across as a victory for the little man. But Randy Newman is six feet tall.

And then there was "Sail Away", in which a slave trader stands before his cargo in Africa and informs them: "In America, you'll have food to eat. Won't have to run through the jungle and stuff up your feet." "Climb aboard, little wog," he sings, "sail away with me."

"I don't try to provoke hatred," Newman says. "There's that old playwright's cliché: 'I don't care what they think. They can hate it as long as they're listening to it and feeling something.' Well, I don't want people to feel hate for me. I don't want them to think that I'm a bigot when I write a song like 'Rednecks' or 'Christmas in Capetown'. It makes me nervous to play them live. But I can't not write them. This is just the way I write."

There are layers here that don't necessarily prompt widespread television and radio coverage. Hence consistent mainstream success has eluded Newman. At 51, he is still bothered by this. "I may write good songs, or interesting songs," he says, "but they haven't proved to be hit songs. It's possible the public taste will turn around and people will say, 'We can't get enough of this irony. Oh, we love irony, driving along the Freeway.' Here, a black laugh. "But it hasn't happened yet."

It's probably fair to say that Randy Newman's *Faust* is not a great Freeway record, though it has other virtues. For instance, there probably hasn't been an album this funny released in

years. It is also, in places, musically spare and poignant in the best Newman tradition. Newman says he was drawn to Goethe's classic because "it really is the work of someone with a big brain", though, as he quickly adds, the Newman version is one "in which none of the grandeur and greatness remains. But it appealed to me, the relationship of the Lord and the Devil. There's a lot in there about the unfairness of the world – the Devil can't reconcile himself to that and neither can I."

Newman had written two of the songs for *Faust* as long as 15 years ago and had been chipping away at the book for a full-blown musical. (A stage version was put on in San Diego recently.) Eventually he decided to distill the work into an album and went to his address book in search of a cast. Some fairly unforeseeable rock-theatrical fusions result. For example, Don Henley of the Eagles plays Faust as a college freshman. "He infused it with such hate, it was fine," Newman says. "The idea of him saying, 'Bless the children of the world, please bless us', is so repulsive that I really like it."

James Taylor, meanwhile, "is sort of Nick Faldo as God. Things come easy to him. His desk is completely empty, and there doesn't seem to be anything there. The Devil can't understand why he keeps losing out to this guy. He thinks he's smarter. But he's not." (It would, of course, be over-interpretative to read into this any relation to the careers of Newman and Taylor.) Taylor, apparently, was largely untroubled by the notion of playing God. "It's all showbusiness anyway," Newman says, "whether it's Mick Jagger pretending to be a street-fighting man or James Taylor pretending to be God. Who knows what's more bizarre?"

Elton John, as an angel, represents one of the album's more surprising inclusions. John and Newman were not names one would necessarily put together. "I'd met him at aftershows," Newman says. "He's not a pal, but I admire him and I think he likes my stuff. We're different people, definitely. But he's such a great rock 'n' roll piano player – one of the all-time top five. Actually, he could have played God."

As yet, Newman says, he has had no fall-out from *Faust*. This would have to be fairly remarkable for a record on which God

and the Devil, in a rare moment of gleeful togetherness, duet prettily over the line, "We're a figment of their imagination". There are ironies here simply queuing up to be missed. "I don't think it's selling enough to cause a problem," Newman says, and looks suddenly mournful. "If it reaches a wide audience it may make a noise, but it's going awfully slow. Actually, it's pretty disappointing what it's done. I have never earned less money in my life than working on a theatrical show and this album. Since I was 16, I generally got paid for what I did – including playing for my mother when she was sick. But writing a show, you go for ever without seeing a dime and I can't afford it."

had imagined a composer of Newman's stature would know a degree of financial stability. "No," Newman insists. "It's the case that I have an ex-wife and lots of kids and I don't know what it would take to make me financially comfortable. If I were Elton John or Billy Joel, maybe I would be comfortable. I don't live high, but if I were to really cut back and live in a two-room flat, I guess I could live the rest of my life out on royalties. But I've got to work to earn a living."

The most lucrative work Newman does these days is composing for Hollywood, in the tradition of his uncles, Lionel, Emil and Alfred, all film composers. Newman's film credits include *Awakenings*, *Ragtime*, *The Natural*, *The Paper* and *Parenthood*. Most recently he has scored two animations for Disney, listening to Prokofiev and "antic Russian stuff" to get into the mood.

"On movies, you get the refreshing opportunity to subdue your ego. What you're doing is 15th in importance on the movie. I fight and yell and take it personally when they change anything, and I hate the people who do it and I wish they were dead. I'm too difficult. You've got these bosses and you're answerable to some guy who bought a CD player so they're an expert on music, or some guy whose aunt doesn't like oboes."

Newman makes it clear that film composition offers him nothing like the same sort of challenge, or satisfaction, as songwriting. "It feels like life and death at the time, but it's not. Writing a song on your own, sitting there with nothing, is about

the hardest for me. And I try to keep the best part of me for that. Even more than being a parent, to tell you the honest to God truth." (Newman has five children, whose ages span from 26 to two. "They get along. The two-year-old and the 26-year-old have quite a bit in common, all in all.")

"I've never had a clear-cut hit that was good for me," Newman says. "I would like to have one of those – a regular double platinum sort of thing. But it doesn't seem likely. I thought 'Baltimore' might work out that way, but I messed up the arrangement. I had all these strings on it and I wrote them kind of low, and just glopped them down. It would have changed everything for me if I had had a regular hit after 'Short People'. 'Short People' did me harm. It was like having a hit with 'The Purple People Eater', a novelty hit. I did the least successful tour I have ever done on the back of that record. It was like Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, a winter tour in the South. It was brutal and they were dropping left and right. Midgets picketed me. I got a death threat. I was playing 3,000-seaters in front of 300 people. The manager would try to console you by saying a lot of people showed late, or that there were a lot of people in the grassy knoll area."

On *Faust*, the discipline of writing for other voices returned Newman, in a sense, to the point from which he set out. Before he released his first vocal album in 1968, he had graduated in musical composition at UCLA and become a \$50-per-week, jobbing songwriter for a company called Metric Music. His songs were picked up by, among others, Alan Price ("Simon Smith and his Amazing Dancing Bear"), Judy Collins, the Walker Brothers and Manfred Mann. Even now, Newman says, he might sit at the keyboard and compose a song for Prince or for Sting. "I never show it to them or anything. It's just an exercise, to see if I can do it – if the harmonic vocabulary's there, or if I'll learn something doing it. Then I just tuck it away. I can usually do that when I'm drifting too far out of the mainstream."

Nevertheless, Newman says, "I've got a feeling I'm sort of at the end of it. I was at the beginning of it all, when singer-songwriters were saying, 'I'm not going to be doing this when I'm 30, I'm not going to be doing this when I'm 40...'. The younger people are


realising that all us old phutzes don't want to get off the stage. We want to keep going. Now we're getting pushed a bit. I think Linda Ronstadt just made a very good record and no one noticed and nothing happened and it worried me. And I've just made this record and whatever it is, it's about the best I can do at the time, and it doesn't have maybe enough rock 'n' roll on it. It's a hard record to assimilate, but it's doing really nothing. It's not

doing enough to keep me in doing this thing. I don't feel a compelling need to say anything any more. I don't feel I have anything to say of importance. What am I going to say?"

There was a pause. "Did that sound like a retirement speech?" Newman asked. Then he gave another black laugh.

"If I was to die tomorrow, the obituary would say, 'Newman, 51, the composer of 'Short People'. Mother would be so proud.'"

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PHOTOGRAPH OF RANDY NEWMAN BY HERBIE KNOTT

arts reviews

MUSIC

Grand Tango Orchestra

The South Bank plays host to that most morally depraved dance. By Philip Sweeney

Of all the gentrified roots musics – blues, flamenco and so on – tango is the least easy to appreciate in the spirit of its Afro-European 19th-century origins. On one level, the virtuosic development of the late Astor Piazzolla has made the music rarefied and cerebral. On another, the poultry-like prancings of a generation of sequined Svens and Traceys have rendered the movements irretrievably risible to anyone who has ever watched *Come Dancing*.

Yet, as the flier for Buenos Aires' El Querandi tango restaurant points out, the old tangos of the slaughterhouse suburbs were noted for "deep, malevolent, sexual, violent and trouble-maker content", and this was the first time a full tango orchestra had played London, since the 1930s anyway. Would the new libertine South Bank be engulfed in vice, one was agog to know, businessmen dancing with each other, knives flashing in the coffee queue? In the event, the three-quarters-full Purcell Room was impeccably subdued and earnest, only a couple of South American-looking gentlemen in toupes peering at the legs of a pretty Japanese girl invoking the faintest hint of deep sexual troublemaking.

The 11 black-clad members of the orchestra deployed in two ranks, grand piano to the left, cello to the right, five violins and one double-bassist standing at the rear, three bandoneonists seated front. Juan-José Mosalini Jr and Serge Amico had leather drapes over their knees to take the writhing of the bandoneons, but the white-haired Mosalini père handled his chestnut and mother-of-pearl instrument unprotected. Born in Buenos Aires, Mosalini spent 15 years working with all the major artists of the tango establishment from Osvaldo Pugliese to Susana Rinaldi and Astor Piazzolla, before moving to Paris, tango's second home, in 1977, from which base his solos, trios and quintets have built him a substantial international reputation.

The 75 per cent French Grand Tango Orchestra is his latest creation, an attempt to re-create in Europe the tradition of the *orquestas típicas* of the Forties and Fifties, whose last great star practitioner Pugliese died this year, but a few of which still exist in Buenos Aires. Many of the *milongas* and tangos in their repertoire are from the golden-age band leaders such as Pugliese, Alberto Firpo, Hanihal Troila, or Seventies successors such as Leopoldo Federico. On the evidence of this concert, Mosalini's project is a complete success. The songs are short, intense and to the point, and the breaks, turns and glissandi are given a simultaneous punch and lushness by the violin section and the extra power of the multiple bandoneons. When a short solo is indulged in by Mosalini, cellist Cecile Girard or first violinist Nicolas Dupin, it is extra powerful for its economy.

The performance ended with Osvaldo Ruggerio's *Bordoneo y 900*, a sort of wild snakes and ladders of vertiginous string climbs and dives on piano or bandoneon, interspersed with strutting rhythmic passages that just about allowed one to glimpse in the mix, under the layers of Buenos Aires and Paris white-ice refinement, the old *candombe* dance of Argentina's black slaves aped by the poor white immigrants in the earliest *milongas*, tango's forerunner. The applause was deep and violent, but entirely unmalevolent.

TELEVISION Coogan's Run (BBC2)

The worst thing you can say about the comedian Steve Coogan is that he drives a flashy car. But on this evidence, he deserves it. By Jasper Rees



George Costigan as Barry Parry and Steve Coogan as Paul Calf in 'Get Calf'

Do bad things ever happen to Steve Coogan? Trawl through the huge piles of we-are-not-worthy interviews, profiles and assorted encomiums which have collectively caused the devastation of several acres of Amazonian woodland, and just the one disaster stands out. It seems that because he goes around in a Ferrari, bankrolled by his matchless talent for mimicry, drivers of humbler vehicles don't let him in at junctions.

Coogan should be the last person to be surprised by this, the first to read its signs. If his comedy has a world view, it's that you are what you drive. The vehicles in "Get Calf", the first of six playlets in *Coogan's Run*, don't just ferry his characters from A to B, they're a window on the soul. When we first met Coogan's smooth-but-naïf salesman Gareth Cheeseman, he was perched nonchalantly on the bonnet of his smooth-but-naïf Monda. Fat Bob (beautifully played, as ever, by the unsung John Thompson) broke down in a suitably handgrog contraption, a sort of lawnmower cloned on to a rickshaw. Julie, Paul Calf's no-nonsense ex, drives one of those no-nonsense hopper buses.

Paul is carless because he is soulless. When he enlists with a religious sect (who travel communally in a sky-blue minibus), he is not motivated by self-improvement: he just wants to get away, and get his end away. Which, needless to say, he last did in the back of a Cortina. In exchange for money.

So, problems at junctions. Otherwise, Coogan leads a charmed life. You can't even fault him for being too much of a good thing. After two years on the go, any other performer would have got

a couple of series out of the Calfs by now. Paul and Pauline are, in effect, only halfway through their debut series. Half-bours one and two were homages to the absurdity of video diaries. "Get Calf" was more conventionally edited, so the visual punchlines were that much slicker. But, as ever, the triumph was in the details: Pauline's pink fluffy jumper, for instance, which matched baby Petula Dusty's cap; Fat Bob's packed lunch, lovingly prepared by his glorious wife, of Monster Munches and yesterday's biscuits; the prison officers who fold their arms the way prison officers just do.

Hitting the spot with the little jokes bought Coogan and his co-writer Henry Normal the right to pepper the script with more direct gags, such as the newspaper spread picturing the escaped Parry brothers, who vow to kill Paul for identifying them in court. "This man is a nutter," screams one headline. "And so are these", choruses another, overleaf. "All me troubles are behind me," boasts Paul, standing in front of a shop full of TV screens with Barry Parry's murderous mug on them.

Space permitting, it would be simpler just to quote the whole script. Spoil forward to the end, where – after storing up all those bonus points – the script takes its biggest liberty when Barry Parry pulls a gun on Paul, only for the members of the sect to pull many more on Barry Parry. One wild implausibility apart, this was comedy with both its feet in the real world. Coogan plainly spends a lot of time going back to his roots, even if he does get there in a Ferrari.

THEATRE

The Country Girl

Greenwich Theatre's production shows flashes of inspiration. By Clare Bayley

A good actor in a mediocre show can turn mere showbiz into theatre "with a capital T", declares a director in Clifford Odets's 1950 theatrical drama. The director (Daniel Stewart) is trying to persuade a once-great, now sozzled actor Frank Elgin to take on the lead role. Did Annie Castledine use the same persuasive techniques on Corin Redgrave to convince him to play Frank in this production? Redgrave may well have balked at taking a part that demands he act out an audition scene, during the course of which he transforms himself from a no-hoper into an actor of "power and majesty". The audition format unwisely affords the audience an insider's view, and the almost inevitable result is that you end up wondering whether another actor could do it better.

The difficulty of acting acting is compounded by the fact that Elgin/Redgrave is performing in a fictional play about which we know nothing except that its own director doesn't rate it. Why should we care whether a fictional actor succeeds in a fictional play? The focus of Odets's own work is also confused. The title refers to Frank's wife, Georgie, whom we first meet as a drab creature, defeated by over a decade of propping up a failure and a drunkard. There are strategic plotting reasons why Frank must dominate the first half, but by withholding information about Georgie for so long, Odets risks spoiling that important initial bond between a character and the audience.

Annie Castledine's production is well judged, and pitched at the correct level throughout. Simon Banham's striking design consists of a large suspended platform which, when down, acts as a raked stage on which rehearsals take place, and, when up, as the attic ceiling of the Elgins's cramped lodging rooms or Frank's on-stage dressing room. Aesthetically and stylistically the production can't be faulted, but its characters singularly lack charisma, and there is no trace of the primal spark of attraction between people that makes the troubled relationships interesting.

The play's one brilliant stroke is that it contains a great deception which completely implicates the audience. When Frank tells his director Bernie that Georgie is consumed by resentment because she sacrificed a brilliant career to marry him, we believe it. Frank's claim that Georgie has been trying to make him fail ever since makes sense, and taints everything we see of her thereafter. Even with evidence of Frank's duplicity before our eyes, the first stone of doubt has been cast against Georgie. Kika Markham plays this ambiguity with the precision of a clock-maker, allowing the pendulum of sympathy to swing first this way, then that, revealing our prejudices and preconceptions.

The final revelations are the high point, and yet a sense of anti-climax quickly follows. The truth – that Georgie never was Miss America, nor did she have a brilliant career to give up, but was always a loyal and faithful wife – is far less interesting than Frank's fiction. The play turns out not to be an unexpectedly relevant examination of sexual politics and the realm of work, but merely a portrait of a good woman in a destructive relationship. The transformation from mediocre show to capital-T Theatre only momentarily takes place.

To 9 Dec. Booking: 0181-858 7755

	STUART MORRIS	DAVID HOCKNEY	HERBIE KNOTT	LAURIE LEWIS
THE PLAY	MOTHER COURAGE	THE EXHIBITION	DAVID BOWIE / MORRISSEY	THE BALLET
overview	Diana Rigg returns to the National in David Hare's new version of Brecht's classic play, with a new score by Jonathan Dove, in a production by Jonathan Kent.	A major retrospective of Hockney's works on paper, from student exercises to opera designs via sketches and pen-and-ink portraits, which sets out to prove that drawing is the foundation of all art.	David Bowie, famously seen (and heard) "Dancin' in the Street" with Mick Jagger, takes on the younger generation in the company of Morrissey, the man who made depression fashionable.	A radical new version choreographed by Matthew Bourne for Adventures in Motion Pictures with Scott Ambler, plus Adam Cooper and Fiona Chadwick from the Royal Ballet.
critical view	Robert Hanks was impressed. "Highly polished and bursting with intelligence." "The translation finds more than the usual amount of humour in the play, and so does Rigg," approved the Times. "I never thought I'd be moved by Bertolt Brecht. This superb production proved me wrong," cheered the Daily Telegraph. But "Brecht needs better advocacy than is shown here," said the Financial Times.	Tom Lubbock said of the pen-and-ink portraits: "If there's a case for drawing here, these must be the leading exhibits." "The most brilliant and versatile draughtsman of his generation," pronounced the Times. "A highly gifted draughtsman with a charming and individual sense of colour," agreed the Daily Telegraph. "Not in the mainstream of modern art," sniffed the Independent on Sunday.	"Morrissey gave his most startling performance in years": Bowie was "a treat", raved Ryan Gibilbey. "A courageous show, which found Bowie turning his back on a comfortable life in the rock 'n' roll heritage industry," but Morrissey "fell as flat as a pancake," said the Times. "Morrissey grappled with an audience who hadn't come to hear him. Bowie has mislaid the art of communication," thought the Evening Standard.	Sophie Constanti cheered: "Never less than superbly performed." "The most fabulous sight on the London stage," swooned the Daily Telegraph. "Striking imagery and some of the best performances you will ever see on a ballet stage," a great hit, agreed the Times. "Preferable to many of the lumpy activities offered by companies who foist ineptitudes on the public," commented the FT.
on view	In the Olivier Theatre repertoire, National Theatre, London SE1 (0171-928 2252).	At the Royal Academy, London W1 (0171-439 7438), to 28 Jan.	The tour reaches Birmingham on Monday, with further dates in Exeter, Glasgow, Sheffield and Manchester.	At Sadler's Wells, London EC1 (0171-278 8916), to 25 Nov. The production will tour in the spring.
our view	The Brecht production for people who think they hate Brecht. Think <i>Coronation Street</i> gone epic. A supremely confident, powerful staging.	The portraits, particularly those of his mother, amount to a remarkable visual autobiography.	Should you miss it, you can always buy the new albums by both performers.	Overturns classical expectations with a male corps de ballet. The lighting by Rick Fisher plays no small part in the evening's success.

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A funny man, that Peter Sellars

'Magic Flute' on a freeway, 'Figaro' in Trump Tower, 'Orlando' in Cape Canaveral: Peter Sellars has earned his reputation as the director opera critics love to hate. Mark Pappenheim watched him at work

"So, hi there, everybody. I'd just like to talk to you all through the production as it exists now. But let's just see how it goes. I really am, you know, like Mr Flexible. If at any time you're unhappy, you just have to say, 'Peter, that's a stupid idea' or 'This is not working, let's do something else.' But try just not to make me actually cry. It's always embarrassing to see the stage director led from the room in tears."

There can't be many opera directors who spend most of their first rehearsal discussing American politics, end up by inviting everyone to stay behind afterwards – "and, if you've got time, we might watch a little TV" (New York City Ballet dancing Balanchine, to be precise) – and break off midway to reassure the cast about the reviews. "You're all prepared for the reviews, right? I mean, this'll just be so attacked, you know." But then, there aren't many opera directors like Peter Sellars.

Sellars enjoys a particularly high (or should that be low?) critical profile here, given that he has only ever done two original stagings in this country, both for Glyndebourne. The first, the 1987 world premiere of Nigel Osborne's *The Electrification of the Soviet Union*, hit the headlines when the baritone walked out over its explicit sexual language and on-stage nudity (well, he did have his Radio 2 audience in mind, of course). The second, a Mozart bicentenary year *Magic Flute* – dialogue-free and set on and under a Los Angeles freeway – provoked the first recorded outburst of booing at the Festival and the resignation of its artistic director, Sir Peter Hall.

Small wonder that Sellars – with his famously spiky hair and diminutive elfin *wunderkind* looks (though now, at 38, the hair is neither so spiky nor the *wunder* so much of a kind) – is the director the critics most love to hate. They particularly love the way he packages his productions so they can wrap them neatly up in some dismissively catch-all cliché and forget them. Just as his Glyndebourne Mozart was filed away as the "Flute on a Freeway", so his televised Mozart/Da Ponte trilogy from Pepsi Summerfare went down in shorthand as "Figaro in Trump Tower", "Don Giovanni in Spanish Harlem", and "Così in Despin's Diner". Why, he's even given the world a Handel *Orlando*, "in Cape Canaveral", with the hero in a space-suit. Enough said!

But his new staging of Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler*, which opened on Thursday to mark the exact centenary of the composer's birth, offers no such easy equation of time and place, least of all the "proper" period setting – a sort of *Master Singers*-ish 16th-century Germany, one supposes – that some might expect for the work's first ever staging by a British company.

If asked, Sellars might well explain, as he did to his cast on that first day of rehearsals six weeks back, that the massive architectural set of steel struts and gold-tinted plexiglass – the buckled skeleton of a once tall sky-

scraper brought crashing down to earth with a bang – stands for "the collapse of capitalism" (or how, after a few false starts, his designer George Tsypin delivered the final shell-shocked model just four days before the Oklahoma City bombing).

He'll talk a lot too about politics: how US Congress has just voted in cut state funding of the arts from 1996 ("so the message is sent: if you're an artist, you better have a day job"); how Congress has also just passed a law ("at one in the morning") making it illegal for non-profit organisations – ie social workers and the arts – to engage in political activity ("whereas if you're for profit – a major defence contractor, say – no problem!"); above all, how the voters of California have just passed Proposition 187, which denies healthcare, emergency medical treatment and basic education to the children of illegal immigrants. "It's just like 1933 – except that, when the Nazis passed their law against the overcrowding of schools, it applied only to secondary and university level, because even Nazis believed that every human being deserves an elementary education. So the voters of California have gone one step further."

It's just such talk, one suspects, that upsets British critics (though, as Sellars says, apologising for going on about America so much, "As you know, any virus that gets hitched there gets washed over here and within three years becomes your social policy"). But how can any opera, written in 1933, and with an inflammatory book burning scene, not be political? How can any director not point the parallels?

"All my life," Sellars tells his cast, "I grew up with the question: why were the German people silent? And now, in my own life, I have to ask the question: why are the American people silent? As artists, we occupy one of the last public spaces, we need to stand up in front of everyone and say: Excuse me, what's going on here? We can't not notice it's happening, so how do we respond?" And, of course, these are the selfsame questions Hindemith puts into the mouth of his artist hero (based upon the historical Matthias Grünewald, master of the Isenheim Altarpiece) in the opera's first lyrical outpouring: "Have you fulfilled the task God gave you? Is art enough?" – questions that Hindemith was forced to ask himself following Hitler's seizure of power in 1933.

In effect, says Sellars, Hindemith wrote *Mathis* as a personal letter to Hitler, and, like Pasternak's similarly motivated missive to Stalin in *Dr Zhivago*, it involved the composer in an equally fundamental change of idiom. "Like Stalin could never have made it through one stanza of early Pasternak, so he had to stop and write another way. I find it terribly moving that Hindemith, this avant-garde composer, had to write what is really the next Wagner opera – because Mr Hitler was able to hear Wagner, and Hindemith just had to ask himself: what can I do to get into those ears?"

The message never got through, of

course: *Mathis*, and all the composer's other music too, was soon banned as the work of a "cultural bolshevik", and in 1938 Hindemith himself went into exile, the only non-Jewish German composer to do so.

Mathis allows us to eavesdrop on the soul-searching behind his final decision. Not so much a work of autobiography as of auto-analysis, it functions on many levels: political, personal, artistic, emotional and – hovering above all, as indistinct yet omnipresent as the shadowy reels of Super-8 footage Sellars has playing across his shattered plexiglass surfaces – the spiritual. "Its complexity is one of its most satisfying dimensions," the director enthuses. "And you can keep things just as complicated as they are."

Quite what message *Mathis* was meant to send out is another matter. By setting his opera at the height of the Peasants' Revolt of 1524-5 and forcing his hero to reassess his role in the face of civil strife – creed against creed, class against class, Lutherans versus Catholics, the poor versus the rest – Hindemith certainly poses key questions about the artist's debt to society. Whether he also offers any answers, and what they are, seems less clear.

As Sellars observed on that opening day of rehearsals, "People seem to have come away from the recent New York staging with the idea that what he is finally saying is that art has no role to play in society – that the artist should just create art in his own living-room. I think that's exactly what he is not saying – but I just want to check." Six weeks on, it's hard to believe that anyone will leave his new staging under the same misapprehension, though the solution he finally offers is, on the face of it, a surprisingly unpolitical one.

But then, as he reminds us, "Grünewald painted his major work for a hospice. That's like an artist today whose only work is for an Aids clinic. And, though we know very little about him – we don't even know his real name – we do know that he just suddenly stopped painting. He seems to have spent the end of his life putting in sewers in small German towns."

Hindemith's hero, too, seems at the end to abandon his art. Some have seen his final Prospero-like farewell to the tools of his trade and the souvenirs of his life as a resigned acceptance of failure, a fateful surrender to imminent death. But listen to the music, not just the text: keep your eye on that ribbon as it passes from Mathis – first to Regina, daughter of the Revolution, then to Ursula, handmaid of the Reformation; follow those instrumental lines in the finale (horn and bassoon for Mathis, oboe then flute for the dying Regina, clarinet for Ursula), and, as Sellars shows, it is possible to put a more optimistic spin on the opera's close. "After all the horrors of war, the mass graves, it's like: we've been through that. Now, what would it be like to really try and live?"

Performances: 20, 22, 28 Nov, 1, 6 Dec, 7pm Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC2. Booking: 0171-304 4000



Peter Sellars in rehearsals for his Covent Garden debut, Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler*

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

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Tina Turner: a big star, a very big star

The Hyde Park Hotel is – of course – that most reticent and enigmatic of hushed luxury hotels. Very, very famous people stay here for that specific reason: Madonna, Pavarotti, etc. We know this because every time a very, very famous person checks in, the hotel sends out a press release to everyone from *Tatler* to *Shoe and Leather News* announcing (in a hushed and reticent manner), that a very, very famous person has chosen the Hyde Park Hotel because it is renowned for its hushed reticence.

Today, the big star is Tina Turner – a woman not famed for silent reserve, it is true (the press release announcing her forthcoming tour dates begins with the rather exciting promise: "See this woman live and believe that Titans still walk the earth"). Today, the Titan will walk the ballroom, at least, to a stage, where she will pose for the

nation with a James Bond gun and a Lycra jogging sweater. The room is packed with frenzied stringers, eagerly practising their Big Question: "How do you manage to keep so fit?" "Are you delighted with your continuing appeal and how do you account for it?" "You look delightful, as ever. How?" And so on. All these questions will be asked soon in the press conference, but first we are shown a compilation of Great Tina Moments – from the inconceivably fabulous "River Deep, Mountain High" times, through "Nutbush City Limits" to that rather startling moment in the early Eighties when she stopped looking like a regular human being and started looking like Aslan, the lion king of Narnia. And now, a very glamorous jogger-cum-drag-queen (Shirley Bassey meets Steve Overt) takes the stage. "Ooh," gasps the assem-

bled throng. "Aah. How did you enjoy working in a Bond movie?" "Great," says Tina. "although my favourite Bond is Sean Connery, so it would have been wonderful to work with him." "Who's your favourite Bond?" "Sean Connery," replies Tina. "And who would your Bond be?" "Um," replies Tina, "Sean Connery." "I'm always too nervous to ask a question in these situations," admits a young lady to me from BBC Network Radio. "It's nerve-racking, with all those people watching." "Oh," I say, "I'm sure it'll be OK." "And their questions are so banal," she continues. "It's true," I say. And it is: questions and answers are being volleyed around like a tennis match between the

Care Bear Bunch. I turn to the radio woman. "You really should ask a question," I say. "It has to be better than all the others." "That's the awful thing," she says, "it is much better. I've got a really interesting question." "What is it?" I ask. "Well," she replies, "everyone is just asking her about her looks, and her health and everything, but I want to really get to the nitty-gritty." "Mmm?" I ask. "I want to ask her if she feels that her artistic integrity is compromised by her commercial appeal." "Ooh," I say. "But I can't," she says. "I'm too shy." "In the end, however, it's all OK: someone else asks exactly the same question." "Good question," says Tina Turner. "Damn," says my friend. "Damn."

books

All you need to know
about the books you
meant to read



By Gavin
Griffiths

This week:
Dostoyevsky's
Crime and Punishment

Plot: Serialised alongside *War and Peace* in the *Russian Herald*, this tragic religious novel is reminiscent of Sophocles's *Oedipus* because the murderer becomes his own detective. In St Petersburg, the impoverished student Raskolnikov trudges through the grimy streets "with a heart exalted by theories". He imagines himself a Napoleon, beyond moral law.

He visits an old woman money-lender and meets the drunken pitiful Marmeladov whose angelic daughter, Sonia, has sold herself into prostitution.

To escape his misery and poverty, Raskolnikov randomly murders the moneylender with a hatchet. Her sister returns unexpectedly and is greeted with the same treatment.

Raskolnikov is then pursued by his conscience and the magistrate Porfiry. Our anti-hero returns to the scene of his crime and his soul begins to awaken. Porfiry, certain of his guilt, waits for him to confess.

Sonia, acting as intercessor, shows Raskolnikov the path of penitence and redemption. She follows him as he goes to the police to own up and then on to Siberia where he is sent to pay for his sin. The novel closes uncertainly with Raskolnikov hoping for "new life".

Theme: Raskolnikov comes to the painful discovery of his own conscience and of God's mercy; no matter how psychologically perverse, the individual is always capable of redemption. The book also seeks to show that in a predominantly evil-seeming world, goodness endures and triumphs; Christian belief is a living force of purification.

Style: Fantastic realism. Dostoyevsky defamiliarises everyday surroundings, laying on his frenetic sentences like thick oil paint to create three-dimensional hallucinations.

What they thought of it then: Dostoyevsky always has a close band of intelligent supporters – although there were complaints (from Tolstoy, among others) that he was too keen to slither along in the muck and tended to be a bit of a ghoulish ham.

What we think of it now: Its status as undisputed classic has tamed the book. Modern critics tend to sanitise Dostoyevsky's insights by sprinkling on a good dose of historical perspective and hanging on about Nihilism.

The secrets of Ekaterinberg

Who killed the Tsar and his family?
Richard Pipes argues that the final order came from Lenin himself

The fate of Russia's Imperial Family – not so much in life as in decline and death – has become a veritable industry. In the past several years, half a dozen books have appeared in English dealing with the last days of the Romanovs; there are even more of them in Russian. Not that much new evidence has come to light to illuminate this tragic tale. Most of the accounts reiterate the same information and add little to the report of N.A. Sokolov, the Russian jurist who in 1918-19 investigated the murder on the spot and in 1924 published a scrupulous summary of his findings.

The only major contributions to the history of the assassination of Nicholas II, his family and servants were made by Trotsky in 1925 and the Russian writer Edward Radzinskii in 1989. In his 1935 diary, Trotsky recalled asking Yakov Sverdlov in the summer of 1918 what had happened to the Imperial family. Sverdlov, Lenin's right-hand man, told him that they had all been shot and that the execution had been carried out on Lenin's personal orders. Radzinskii discovered and published the recollections of Yakov Yurovsky, the Chekist who headed the execution squad and who personally killed the ex-tsar.

The grisly story is known virtually to the smallest detail: Nicholas, his wife and five children, along with the family doctor and three servants, were executed in gangster fashion on the night of July 16-17 and their remains, partly destroyed by fire and sulphuric acid, buried in a secret grave (which has since been located). Yet so morbid is the fascination of the public with the assassination of prominent historic figures that there exists an insatiable market for books which retell the story and raise questions about the established version. Some people doubt whether Lenin actually gave the order for the massacre or whether it was not more plausibly carried out on the initiative of the Soviet of Ekaterinburg, the city where it occurred. Others believe that the only person killed was Nicholas and that the remaining members of the family were spared, as the official Bolshevik communiqué of the event claimed.

The authors of *The Fall of the Romanovs* have the benefit of previous scholarship as well as unrestricted



The Fall of the Romanovs by Mark D. Steinberg and Vladimir M. Khurstalev, Yale, £18.50

access to Soviet archives. The heart of their book consists of 160 documents, most of them from the State Archive of the Russian Federation. They cover the period from February 1917, when the monarchy collapsed, until July 1918. Each batch of documents is preceded by extensive commentaries designed to provide their historical setting.

Do they tell us much that is new? Not really. The bulk of the documents in this collection has been published previously. The new evidence consists mainly of exchanges between Moscow and the government agent charged with escorting the Romanovs from Tobolsk, their original place of confinement. They prove conclusively that the Imperial Family was removed from Tobolsk to be brought not to Moscow, as previously believed, but to Ekaterinburg. Some of the actions of their escort, Yakovlev Mikhlin, are somewhat clearer in the context of these documents but his handling of the Imperial family (referred to in communications with the Kremlin as "the baggage") still remains obscure.

It is regrettable that the authors chose not to indicate previous publications of their documents. Thus the reader is not informed that the extensive excerpts of the diaries of Empress Alexandra which they publish in full were first made public by the American journalist, Isaac Don Levine, in the *Chicago Daily News* 75 years ago. Nor is credit given to Edward Radzinskii for discovering and publishing Yurovsky's recollections, which are here reproduced once again. The same holds true of the spurious letters sent to the Imperial family in their prison by an alleged monarchist prepared to abduct them, but in fact written by the local Cheka. Such omissions create the wrong impression that these and many other documents in the volume are made public for the first time.

The narrative, especially that part credited to Professor Steinberg, is crisply written and lucid but it does not reveal profound knowledge of the era. Suffice it to say that it incorrectly attributes to General Kornilov, whose

quarrel with Kerensky in August 1917 fatally weakened the Provisional Government, the demand "that all civil and military authority be placed in his hands". In reality, this was a proposal made to Kerensky by a bumbling meddler, V. Lvov, who pretended to be an emissary from Kornilov. The descriptions of the February Revolution and October coup follow rather conventional class war scenarios, devoting little attention to the political conflicts.

The most unconvincing aspect of the narrative is the way in which it raises doubts about Lenin's role in the murder of the Imperial family. Indeed, no written order from Lenin mandating the execution of the ex-tsar has been found (although a low-level Soviet functionary claimed to have carried such an order to the telegraph office). But this no more proves his involvement than the absence of a written instruction from Hitler to kill all the Jews, on which Nazi apologists rely, absolves him of ultimate responsibility for the Holocaust.

Massacre of the innocents: three of the Romanov children, Maria, Alsei and Anastasia, on holiday with a German cousin in 1910.

From 'Royal Russia: The Private Albums of the Russian Imperial Family' text by Carol Townend (Smith Gryphon, £17.99)

Lenin was exceedingly careful not to associate his name with acts of Communist terror. He preferred to attribute them to others, usually either government officials or local soviets, partly to absolve himself from blame, partly to remove the onus for these barbarities from the Party. Anyone familiar with the way the Soviet regime functioned during his lifetime realizes that nothing of importance was done in Soviet Russia without Lenin's personal approval. He would one day order 100 peasants in the province of Penza to be hanged publicly to frighten others into surrendering their grain. At another time, he would command that all the Cossacks of a town in the Urals be "exterminated" if they set fire to the oil wells. (Both these instructions were issued in secret and made available only recently). It is simply inconceivable, even if we did not have Trotsky's testimony to this effect, that the Ekaterinburg soviet would on its own initiative undertake an act that was bound to have the most ominous domestic and international repercussions. For the fate of the Empress and her daughters was fraught with diplomatic dangers since Berlin, on which the Bolsheviks then heavily depended both militarily and financially, regarded them as German nationals.

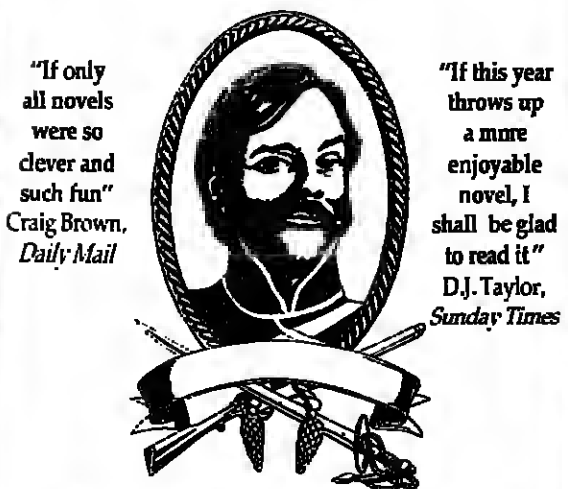
To impute even tentatively the decision to local authorities is particularly eccentric given that we have Yurovsky's own word (which the authors cite) that Ekaterinburg received on July 16 an order from Perm, the administrative centre of the Urals, "to exterminate the R-ovs".

Lenin more than once attributed to local soviet authorities actions which he thought politically dangerous. He resorted to a strikingly similar stratagem in ordering the execution in Irkutsk in February 1920 of Admiral Kolchak whom he wanted out of the way but feared formally condemning to death because the White leader had influential sympathizers in Britain with whom Soviet Russia was about to open commercial negotiations.

Perhaps the time has come to proclaim a moratorium on this subject until – if ever – genuinely new sources come to light.

Richard Pipes is Baird Professor of History at Harvard

If only Flashman had got on with his dinner, and ignored the handkerchief dropped by a flirtatious hussy in a Calcutta hotel ... American history would have been different, and a disastrous Civil War might have been avoided ...



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Anatomy of a giant

Modern Russian politics defeats facile explanation. By Godfrey Hodgson

As Russia faces two elections, for parliament in December and presumably for the presidency next year, and as Boris Yeltsin, the West's chosen saviour, prepares to leave the stage, this clear-eyed account, written out of personal experience and original thought, is very timely.

Bruce Clark's view is what most Western observers would regard as pessimistic. He predicts the failure of the liberal Little Russia which has been the West's preferred option. But then he thinks that most western analysis has largely missed the point of what is happening in Russia: he believes that Russia is recovering economically and will soon be making itself felt diplomatically.

Whether or not you agree with all his conclusions, this account is to most journalistic commentary on Russian politics what a long, careful analysis is to a 30-second piece to camera on CNN, where all that locates you in Russia is the silhouette of St Basil's cathedral.

This rare attempt to understand Russia in its own terms starts with a great advantage over those who try to understand it only in ours. The Orthodox church is a good example of this. At first, westerners saw it as a heroic band of persecuted martyrs. Then, when the full extent of the church leaders' collaboration with the KGB became known, they were shocked. Clark

An Empire's New Clothes:
The End of Russia's
Liberal Regime
by Bruce Clark
Vintage, £7.99

points out that, to the Orthodox mind, co-operation with the temporal power was always seen as necessary to safeguard the spiritual dimension of life under autocracy. He begins with an illuminating examination of the furious arguments over the very nature of Russia among intellectuals. He explains the influence, for example, of Lev Gumilyov's theory of Russia as a "super-ethnos", compounded of Slav and Turkish civilisations. To Western readers, that sounds like crazy geopolitical nonsense; yet Gumilyov is not some wild, Dostoyevskian holy fool, but the historian son of that supreme heroine of western liberalism, Anna Akhmatova.

Clark examines the strange, shifting alliances, the diametric alternations of ideas in the Russian political class. "Villains have metamorphosed into heroes, destitutes into multimillionaires, and reformers into arch-conservatives and back again". The post-Soviet world, intellectual as well as political, is, he says, far more remote from that of the West

than we are prone to believe. Yet he does not underestimate the sophistication of the new Russian politics: think of chess and the hydrogen bomb, he observes in passing.

He is led to some surprising, even sensational conclusions. The war in Chechnya was not an aberration, he says, but an essential part of a rational, if ruthless, strategy for controlling exports from the new Caspian oilfields. He takes Vladimir Zhirinovskiy seriously, interpreting his imperialist ravings as the cover for a cool strategy of neutralising those countries – Turkey, Afghanistan and Iran – which share divided populations (Kurds, Tajiks and Azeris respectively) with the former Soviet Union. Indeed, he suspects a tacit alliance between Yeltsin and Zhirinovskiy, the anti-Semite who, Clark shows, probably had a Jewish father: a perfect illustration of how things in the new Russian politics are never quite what they seem.

He suspects Yeltsin and his allies of manipulating the media image of his victory over the 1993 coup, and accuses them of stage-managing the killings at the Ostankino television centre.

His central contention, and it is on the whole convincing, is that the West in general, and the United States in particular, has committed a historic mistake by patronising and underestimating this convalescent giant.

Somme culture

Patriotism, poppies and free love. Mark Bostridge on Great War fiction

At the funeral, in 1974, of the First World War poet and memoirist Edmund Blunden, a wreath of Flanders poppies was scattered on his coffin in symbolic recognition of the way in which he had moulded his writing and scarred his life. The image of those fluttering poppies kept coming to my mind as I read Hugh Cecil's new book. Selecting a dozen writers, Cecil has attempted to show the very different ways in which they made use of their war experiences in their fiction.

Over the past few years, we have ourselves been witnessing a minor resurgence of interest in novels about the First World War, with the success of Sebastian Faulks's bestselling *Bridsong* and Pat Barker's acclaimed trilogy, and so it is both timely and useful to be reminded of the original, much larger market for war books which opened in 1928, 10 years after the Armistice, and which finally petered out in the early Thirties, when the diminishing hopes of lasting peace replaced it with a new, more urgent phase of war literature.

It is also a welcome corrective to the traditional picture to learn that the war books of the Twenties and Thirties did not represent a one-note literature of disillusionment. Novels which celebrated patriotism and pre-war values of idealism and hope continued to be published and, moreover, to reach a wide and receptive readership.

The Flower of Battle:
British Fiction Writers of
the First World War
by Hugh Cecil
Secker, £25

With the exception of Richard Aldington, and possibly of Herbert Read, none of Cecil's chosen novelists will be familiar to modern readers, though many of them were bestselling authors in their day. Cecil has unearthed some fascinating personal stories. There is a pattern of tragic inevitability in the chapter on A.D. Griestwood, author of *The Somme*, who never emerged from the shadow of the war and who finally took his own life. There is also the delightfully unpredictable tale of Robert Keable, a chaplain on the Western Front who abandoned Christianity after the war for a life of free love on a Tahitian island.

And yet one's overriding feeling is that most of the novels discussed in this book are second- or even third-rate, mere historical curiosities, and that Cecil's determination to revive them for posterity is almost like an act of piety. It's also difficult not to conclude that the best of British writing arising from the war lies in poetry and autobiography (while recognising

the strong fictional element in the memoirs of Sassoon and Graves). Britain didn't produce a war novelist of the stature of Remarque, and it is perhaps regrettable that what is without doubt the greatest British novel of the war, Frederic Manning's *The Middlemarch of Fortune*, receives only a passing mention.

Furthermore, Cecil's biographical approach seems a misguided one. Collective biography is notoriously difficult, and whatever singularity these novels possess seems to go missing in a great swamp of biographical information. The relationship between the authors' experience and their writing also gets lost. The case of R.H. Mottram is particularly telling in this respect. In spite of being filmed in 1930, and televised in the Sixties, Mottram's *Spanish Farm Trilogy* has never won the popularity it deserves. Cecil's chapter on Mottram is scrupulously researched but fails to explain why Mottram avoided using his direct experience of the fighting in his work, nor why it is love and not war that is such a strong component of his novels.

There is something genuinely heroic about the way in which Cecil has tried to establish a link with the Great War generation before their stories become irretrievable. But what we need now is a more thematic, less idiosyncratic, study of the influence of the war on the literary imagination.



Unbuttoning the master

Mad about the boys: Noel in the pool in Jamaica (above), and beside it with Cole Lesley and Lance Hamilton, c.1955

Philip Hoare's intimate life of Noel Coward is out this week. Here, he describes the joys and frustrations of separating the man from the legend

It is a presumptuous matter to announce one's intention to write the definitive biography of a legend. Had I known, five years ago, that the road ahead was strewn with quite as many eggshells, I might have thought twice about the prospect of producing a life of Noel Coward.

My first obstacle was a substantial one, in the shape of Sheridan Morley, author of the first serious biography of Coward, published in 1969, four years before Coward died. What would he make of an upstart like me? To my relief, he not only didn't mind, he was positively encouraging. But with the rest of the theatrical fraternity, the stock reaction to my request for interviews was depressing. "Hasn't he been done enough already?" – rather as though Noel were a sausage on the barbecue. It was difficult to argue my case without bringing up the great bugbear of modern biography: sex. When Morley wrote his book, he had been asked by Coward not to mention his homosexuality for fear of offending the blue-rinsed ladies of East Grinstead. But Noel added, "After my death, it's another matter". I took this as my cue. Yes, I was going to talk about sex – how else could you discuss a homosexual playwright's work, especially one still living in the shadow of Wilde? But no, it wasn't going to be a catalogue of one-night stands – as extensive as that might be, in Coward's case.

It was also difficult to contend that no one had written comprehensively

about Coward, without appearing to disrespect Morley's work or Cole Lesley's book. The latter – Coward's manservant and secretary – had taken up the challenge after the gory fate of the would-be authorised biographer, James Pope-Hennessy, who had announced the sizeable advance he had received to the *Evening Standard* "Londoner's Diary", only to be found soon after strangled by one of the "rough trade" he was wont to pick up. When the *Standard* breezily printed the amount of my own advance, I made sure the chain was on the door.

Things didn't seem to be going so well. I heard that a writer called Clive Fisher was about to publish his own account of Coward's life. I considered throwing it all in. But an appalling sense of *schadenfreude* overcame me when I learned that Coward's estate had taken against Fisher and were refusing him access to or permission to quote from Coward's unpublished work. They didn't like Fisher's emphasis on Noel's homosexuality; conversely, I would have to deal yet more delicately with the subject. I approached Joan Hirst, keeper of Noel's flame in this country (his heir, Graham Payn, lives in Chalk in Switzerland). Over tea, I was vetted. She'd read my biography of the aesthete Stephen Tennant, and approved.

Soon I was being summoned to the deluxe environs of Montreux, and to be met at the station by Mr Payn. He was much too nice, and drove an exceedingly modern electric blue



customised sports car. I warned to him immediately. That night, after dinner, we talked until the small hours. There was no question, no matter how personal, which he would not answer. "Mum's Suite" – Violet Coward's battered attaché case stuffed with letters and much unpublished material – was pulled down from a top shelf.

Thereafter the doors of Belgrave and Mayfair opened as if by magic. Sir John Gielgud returned my calls. Sir Dirk Bogarde wrote three-page letters. Requests to see manuscripts which had never seen the limelight were met with assent. I also met some enemies, people whom Coward had annoyed, or apparently treated badly. I was faced with a new difficulty: what to include. Certain facts would prove to be scandalous, shocking even. Intimate details

of sexual encounters do not translate easily into even-handed prose. The American composer, Ned Rorem, gave me an, er, blow-by-blow account of his affair with Coward (Rorem confessed that the Master wasn't very G.I.R.). Research disintegrated other tales: it became clear that Noel's first serious relationship was with a painter old enough to be his father; Noel had been 14. This artist, I discovered, had very definite links with the Uranians, a paedophilic group of the 1890s. Such prickly material required kid-glove treatment.

One major bonus for the biographer of an inveterate traveller is the excuse to follow in his footsteps. Jamaica? I went of my own accord. I also worked up a reason to tour pre-election South Africa, getting perilously lost and interviewing an elderly Wimbledon

champion in Cape Town whose husband was rumoured to have been Coward's boyfriend. America provided plenty of leads. One afternoon I returned to the Gramercy Park Hotel in downtown Manhattan and asked if there were any messages. The young chap on the desk – who looked like an American footballer – answered in abject admiration, "Katharine Hepburn called for you".

I tried to appear nonchalant, just as I did the next day when I arrived at Miss Hepburn's townhouse on the Upper East Side. I was shown into the kitchen, where her black chauffeur was eating breakfast. Upstairs, her feet up on a sofa, was K.H. Over iced water and in her characteristic vibrato, she talked Noel. How frustrating it was that he would never play tennis when she visited him in Jamaica, preferring to lie around the pool, usually naked. How Noel's life in the country was the same as Noel's in the town, "only a different temperature". And a veiled criticism – unusual, for this famously reserved woman – of Coward's lover and manager, Jack Wilson: he was "not of his calibre". (In fact Wilson had exploited and embezzled money from his boyfriend and almost managed to get him locked up for currency irregularities during the Second World War). Then Miss Hepburn insisted I eat. Taking a tin of crab meat from a Fifties fridge (her kitchen was straight out of *Driving Miss Daisy*), she tasted it, saying, "If I don't die, you'll be OK". I

passed on this early lunch (it was 11am), and left. What a woman.

It was in Jamaica that Coward seemed closest. Here, I gleaned information on his expatriate life. His old friend Morris Cargill told me how annoyed Noel was when Larry Olivier came to stay and insisted on smoking dope. I heard about the sticky *ménages* of the Flemings (Ian with Blanche Blackwell; Ann with Hugh Gaitskell), which so fascinated Noel that he wrote an (unpublished) play about them, *Kilcano*. At Coward's house, Firefly, I sneaked into his Hawaiian shirts, and felt a genuine frisson when I found the black-tiled shower room where the Master collapsed and died, on 26 March 1973. Sitting on Noel's tombstone on the brow of Firefly Hill, I watched a tropical storm gather in the bay and sweep up, sending us running for cover. I hoped it wasn't some sort of omen.

Back in England, there was one surprise yet to come. Until then, I had found no first-hand evidence of Coward's wartime espionage work. The text had already been edited and was ready for proofing when I was told of certain documents which I shouldn't have seen but did, and which required the rewriting of an entire chapter. It was a suitably dramatic note on which to end. Even to the last, Noel was determined to deliver a final twist to the plot.

Noel Coward: A Biography by Philip Hoare is published by Sinclair-Stevenson at £25

Throwing the world out of whack

Robert Winder sifts through the posthumous fragments of the great Italian fabulist, Italo Calvino

Italo Calvino's bottom drawer is turning out to be one of the roomiest in modern literature. The sunny Italian maestro has been dead for 10 years now, but it seems to have had no effect on his publication schedule. When people say of writers that death could be a smart career move, they usually mean that it will give their reputation a twist of gravitas. But in Calvino's case it seems to have been a purely notional event. This collection of stories – some of which have previously appeared in Italian newspapers and magazines, some of which were rejected manuscripts – is the fourth volume to have been published since his death.

It is by no means his best work; it might even be his least impressive. Naturally, it is full of neat ideas and pleasant narrative manners. If it were by an unknown writer, we would be busily applauding the arrival of a singular and impressive new voice. But in the context of his already dazzling portfolio of modern classics, it can't help looking like a sketchbook full of rough drafts – a memento for fans. Bottom-drawer publications often address a biographical interest more than a literary one – they catch great writers in their unguarded moments. In this sense, the volume shows mainly that Calvino was a canny judge of his own efforts, and knew what to leave on the back burner.

Not that it is remotely dull or uninteresting: it is just that the stories here, stray shots from a man who wrote every day of his adult life, are quiet versions of preoccupations indulged more thoroughly elsewhere. There are, for instance, a couple of stories which might easily have featured in *Invisible Cities*, Calvino's beautiful sequence of ruminations on the nature of civil life. Here, he proposes a town where everyone is a thief. It is a perfectly egalitarian society: every night, people go and empty some-

Numbers in the Dark
by Italo Calvino
trans. Tim Parks
Cape, £15.99

one else's house. There are exactly the right number of houses to go round, so no one returns home empty-handed.

What ruins this happy paradise is the arrival of one honest man, who stays in and reads novels when he should be breaking and entering. His honesty means that one thief is forced to go back to his burgled house empty-handed. In a stroke, he creates poverty. Others begin to imitate his example, and so the divisions between rich and poor are created. Calvino was a member of the Communist Party when he wrote this, and it is a very beguiling version of the maxim that all property is theft. All possessions, in this cheerfully imagined fairytale, are ill-gotten. The rich are merely those who selfishly lock the door on their own possessions.

In his greater books Calvino would make much of this sense of asymmetry, this idea that one minuscule shift could throw everything out of whack. Here, in the title story, an eager accountant worries away at an error in the books of a vast and ancient building company. In the end, he finds a tiny slip-up of a few hundred lire in a 17th-century ledger. It fills him with panic. This fractional mistake, he believes, has thrown everything out of kilter. The mistake has entered the system, like a lie, and been amplified by hundreds of years of compound interest. "The whole world," he cries, "is distorted by this mistake." As so often in Calvino, the world has fallen, irrevocably, from grace into bafflement.

There are many other nice ideas in this collection. There's a dizzy monologue by a man present at the birth of the universe, who remembers it all. There's a sweet memoir of Casanova in which he reflects on the complexity of his loves. And there is a nice interview with Neanderthal Man, who ruins the journalist's insistence that he is talking to the world's first man by saying the words: "My dad". And there's a political satire called "Beheading the Heads," in which the political leaders are routinely executed at the end of their term of office. Typically – this is Calvino, not Kafka – it emerges as a comedy: the politicians negotiate the arrangement down to the amputation of a finger here and there.

The whole book, indeed, is a catalogue of bright ideas. But they rarely transcend their status as anecdotes. Even the style, normally the epitome of unruffled clarity, takes a few wrong turns. "To explode or to implode," Calvino writes at the beginning of a science fiction odyssey, "that is the question." This is a pretty heavy-handed marriage between science and literature (for which the translator cannot really be blamed).

In his more developed work, Calvino would make art from the fusion of contrasting mentalities. Indeed, it is a tribute to the slippery and approachable nature of his genius that one of the stories here, a fiendish puzzle about computer processing and vocabulary, should have first been published in *Playboy*. It is nice to learn that it was intended for the avant-garde modernist magazine *Oulipo*. "I can't prevent the slow tentacles of my mind," Calvino writes, "advancing one hypothesis at a time, exploring labyrinths of consequence that magnetic memories would run through in a nanosecond." As Calvino's widow points out in her introduction, it was devised as "an example of *ars combinatoria*". I bet the *Playboy* readers thought it was filthy.

Party on Parnassus

John Walsh discovers who's in and who's out at the literary gathering of the century

"An attempt to reflect a century of literary taste," is how Peter Parker describes this 825-page compilation of mini-biographies of 1,000 writers, from Lascelles Abercrombie to Louis Zukofsky. In fact the time-scale stretches impressively beyond a century: Thomas Hardy (b 1840) is allowed to be a 20th-century writer (though he stopped writing novels in 1898, his career as a poet was only starting) and Simon Armitage (b 1963) is deemed worthy to be included alongside him, despite having been published since only 1989. Poets and dramatists are included, but not historians, essayists or biographers (no Leavis, Schama or Lytton Strachey, therefore). American writers figure largely, most of them drinking ferociously and dying young, but the *Companion's* grasp on colonial literature is less sure (no sign of Tim Winton for instance). Genre writers are included, but not children's authors (Agatha Christie, yes, Enid Blyton, no). Parker's introduction offers no guidelines about the criteria used to include or omit certain writers, so we can only guess why, say, Jay McInerney is included but not Bret Easton Ellis; why Will Self is in, but not Sebastian Faulks. One could, however, spend the rest of this review arguing about the guests at this "lively literary gathering" (Parker's words).

Students, and those looking for brisk summings-up of why a writer or his work is important may feel a little short-changed by the *Companion*. Beckett? "Much of the prose from the 1950s and 1960s is almost unreadable." *Finnegans Wake*? "A salmagundi of linguistic fragments and borrowings" (it's actually a salmagundi of puns and portmanteaux). Patrick Hamilton? His novels "are major monuments of the fiction of their time" (would this be of the mid-

The Reader's Companion to Twentieth-Century Writers
ed. Peter Parker
Fourth Estate, £25

Twenties, the mid-30s, the late-40s or the mid-50s, or all of them?). These tentative, O-level judgements are the weakest part of the book but perhaps you shouldn't be looking here for serious evaluations. Parker and his crew of contributors did their bit for Lit Crit in their *Reader's Companion* to the *Twentieth-Century Novel*. The current book is a far more *ad hominem* affair.

It faithfully records where each writer went to school, whether their parents were married or divorced, who brought them up, how they first got published, why and when they turned to drink, how this or that scandal broke, what was said about them by whom, what prizes they won, what marriages were made or broken, how successful or how unread they were or remain... But the structure is not, thank goodness, formulaic. Some entries gallop breathlessly through the facts, some languidly quote the judgements of the writer's peer group, some get obsessive and shrill about one detail, by no means necessarily a literary one. Thus the entry for A.N. Wilson bangs on for a paragraph about his fogeyism and the "misconduct" for which he was sacked from the *Spectator*, before noting "He had also published 14 novels by the mid-1990s". We learn of the "decadent" poet Jeremy Reed's performances, where "holding aloft one gloved hand he recites his poems in a curious sing-song manner, occasionally through a human skull.

There are those who think that his delivery does very little for his work..."

This tone of educated bitchiness sounds constantly when dealing with women writers. Anita Brookner's entry (rather like her *oeuvre*) starts with sprightly formality, shades off into gloom and ends, tartly, "She is unmarried". Angela Carter's "personal manner", we learn, "had become very grand by the time of her death" (which is untrue). Jeanette Winterson "is perhaps unique in choosing one of her own novels as her Book of the Year in a newspaper round-up". Just as beguiling are the thousand or so sidelong details that enliven the entries. I was happy to learn that James Kirkup is a crowned ollave of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids and that his recreation is given in *Who's Who* as "standing in shafts of moonlight" (formerly "standing in shafts of sunlight"). How nice to learn that Arthur Ransome, of *Swallows and Amazons* fame, married Trotsky's former secretary; that the novelist Justin Cartwright played polo for Oxford, that Forrest Reid dedicated his book *The Garden Gate* to Henry James, and James, upon noting the book's homosexual content, demanded the dedication be removed. How did I not know that Angus Wilson was at Bletchley?

The word "companion" can connote several things: the sidekick-for-life, the shadowy helpmeet who enjoys the sole *meunier* in restaurant reviews, the paid-up spinster who travels to Monte Carlo with the fur-draped dowager. Peter Parker's compilation of brief lives is far more amusing than any of these images might suggest. This "companion" is a gossip, slightly ractety, age- and prize-obsessed androgynous of middle years, with a jealous streak and a decidedly camp habit of sudden, urgent digression.

Slave to Daddy

Keening wails and five-hour breakfasts: Christina Patterson on an addition to pater-familiar literature

Driving My Father by Susan Wicks, Faber, £9.99

Germaine Greer, Philip Roth and Sharon Olds are among a crop of writers who have published recent high-profile books about dead and dying fathers. Usually described as "painfully honest", they herald some kind of a trend towards washing your post-Freudian complexities in public. The big question, however, is what, if anything, can be added to the genre after Blake Morrison's wonderful, moving and funny memoir, *And When Did You Last See Your Father?*

Susan Wicks is uncowed by this. One of last year's New Generation poets, she has published two collections, *Singing Underwater* and *Open Diagonals*. Slightly uneven, both reveal a startling and often surreal imagination, a preoccupation with birth, sex and the cycle of life and a cool, unflinching gaze. It is this gaze – detached, precise, observant – that sets the tone of her memoir, an account that proves to be utterly without self-pity. It begins (and ends) with the news of her mother's death, the event she has feared and imagined all her life. Her father's response is "a strange sound, an odd kind of high wailing", a torrent of grief that becomes and remains a part of him. From this point on, he is identifiable by "the sound of his keening", a word which gives a weird dignity to his despair. And from this point on, Wicks is a slave to a father who is catapulted into old age, loneliness and dependency.

Her account seems at first to be a random collection of snippets and jottings. In fact, it is very carefully structured, a collage of visits to her father, bearing casseroles and clean clothes, memories of childhood, dreams, fantasies and refrains. All are recounted in the same dispassionate, clear prose, spare to the point of extreme economy. The result has a staccato and fragmented quality that feels appropriate for a subject which could, in other hands, have sunk into nostalgic sentimentality. With a poet's eye, she selects details, images and snippets of dialogue that build up a convincing picture of her father's character, his relationship with her mother and their life together as a family. An interesting tension emerges between

the child's hero-worship of a father who makes wonderful toys and is admired by all her friends and the adult's clear perception of a man dominated by his lifelong desire for attention. A further tension is added by fantasies and dreams. It is here that the stress, anxiety and sheer horror of it all surfaces. Wicks the loyal and loving daughter is endlessly patient, kind and solicitous, even though it takes her father "more than five hours ... to have his breakfast and get dressed". Faced with the sight of him "clinging to the banisters and wailing", his utter helplessness and vulnerability, she has dreams about fighting off dead limbs. She also has fantasies of escape, of being found by her father wearing her mother's huge, custom-made bra, even of suffocating him. These are recounted in the future tense and their true status – dream? reality? desire? – is not immediately clear. They add texture and uncertainty to the narrative, a kind of contained, poetic wildness.

Two central images emerge, symbols of love and ambivalence. The first is the driving mentioned in the title. Wicks's frequent car journeys to visit her father are among her happiest moments, taking her to the person she loves so much and also offering the fantasy of escape from that responsibility. They are simultaneously a symbol of enslavement and freedom, life-as-a-journey, suspended animation and waiting for death. The second is the kite whose string is on the cover. Eric Wicks made beautiful kites for his daughter, kites she would fly proudly and then, to his horror, by accident, release. This memory is a wonderful, if rather literal, symbol of the bond between father and daughter and also of uncertainty, transience and letting go.

This book is, above all, a record of love and its capacity to surprise. It is a tribute to a man who was not particularly talented, bright or handsome, but who was made extraordinary by the love he gave and received. In spite of all the frustration, irritation and anxiety, there is no sense of unfinished business, tangled knots or Larica's infamous dictum. No father could ask for more.



Culture clash: a peasant woman and her daughter counting apples, oblivious of the couple in the car behind them. Like many of the photographs in Henri Cartier-Bresson's 'Mexican Notebooks' (Thames and Hudson, £18.95), this image explores the paradoxes of a culture in which birth and death, pagan and Christian, continuity and change coexist in perpetual tension. The little girl has the still

solemnity of an Aztec sculpture. She and her mother turn their back on the modern world, serenely self-absorbed and monumental, in contrast to the young woman glancing nervously out of the car. The ancient culture remains unmoved by the shock of the new. As Carlos Fuentes writes of Cartier-Bresson in his introduction, 'he photographed Mexican eternity and he photographed it in an instant'.

A handful of ants

Helen Stevenson is touched by memories of mendacity

The Liars' Club
by Mary Karr
Picador, £14.99

The Liars' Club has a great title for a novel, but passes in the catalogue for a memoir. A memoir always sounds more like the article you kept your memories in than the memories themselves, one in which they invariably grow stale; some grim black box on grandmother's dressing table, full of old photographs and badges and a letter or two.

Mary Karr's account of her Texan childhood has nothing of the reliquary about it. If there is a shadow on some of her memories, it is a shadow of anguish, not of old age. If the picture is ever blurred, it is not through lapse of memory, but because the image has been singed by fires.

It opens with an undeciphered memory. Mary and her sister Licia are seven and nine, alone in their house with the sheriff and the family doctor. Their house is in a town once judged as one of the ten ugliest places in America, "one of the blackest squares on the cancer map". Each member of the family is doing what characterises them best: mother is drunk, mad and missing; father is working the graveyard shift at the oil refinery, reliable enough to set your watch by, but reliably absent. Licia pretends to sleep in the arms of the sheriff, faking calm in the face of catastrophe, and Mary is trying to pinch her awake. It is a recurring gesture, this pinching someone awake – "Is this really happening? Can this nightmare be real?" It takes a whole book for the writer, let alone the reader, to decipher the origins of this one nightmare among many.

Despite Karr's honest-to-God assurances of veracity ("I shit you not," she keeps saying, "I shit you not"), the title is unnerving. Mary's father sometimes let her sit in on the sessions in the back room of Fischer's Bait Shop, where he would pay out the thin wine of his artful fabrications, mesmerising his listeners with recollections from his own childhood. During a lucid account of "How my daddy died. He banged himself", which even seven-year-old Mary recognises for "easily the highest lie Daddy ever told", she drifts off into a memory of her dead grandmother, whose hand hung slack over the bedside, with little red ants running up and down the thoroughfares of her palm. "I've plumb forgot where I am, for an instant, which is how a good lie should take you. At the same time, I'm more where I was inside myself than before Daddy started talking, which is how lies can tell you the truth." Then she remarks, "The lie stayed built between him and the other men like a fence put up to keep them from knowing him better."

Any evocation of childhood that achieves a genuine Proustian quality, but with short sentences and more laughs, has to be read to be appreciated. When reviewers insist "I laughed, I cried" one is usually tempted to enquire sourly, "Yes? And when you came off the drugs?" But here it would not be untrue. Tales of blistering suffering and violence, often occasioned by Mary's mother's drinking, are laced with a laconic wit and a ferocious love which light up every page. The wit is never bitter: the love is not the pious love of the therapist-out adult, but the fierce loyalty of a child, that needy love which explains why children would rather suffer all manner of cruelties than be deprived of the essential presence of the parent who inflicts them.

If there is one aspect of *The Liars' Club* which keeps you flicking back nervously to the title, it is the language of its descriptions, which is at once too exact to be believable as recollection, and yet too powerful not to be true. This is a study of, and not in, mendacity, in which it is made quite clear that it is the lies of omission which cause the real damage, not the lies of invention. Mary's mother's lies of omission create a black hole in the family's past, which not even her father's joyful fictions, nor this breathtakingly shrewd and loving memoir, could ever be expected to repair.

Who's reading whom?



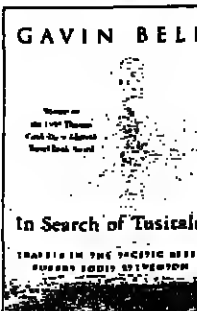
Rupert Christiansen's 'Tales of the New Babylon', a portrait of Paris during the Second Empire, is published by Minerva

In the summer I picked up a copy of *Memoirs of a Bengal Civilian* by John Beames (Eland) in a hotel bookshop in Jaipur. It's an absolute gem. Beames, a District Officer in Bengal from 1858-1879, was the best kind of man produced by the British Empire: just, tolerant, kind and with complete integrity. His prose, the product of a good, ordinary classical Victorian education, is almost indistinguishable from the man – sober and sane and progressing from A to B to C in everything, including his loathing of Indian rent collectors (against whom he waged war) and the worst excesses of the British in India. He is terribly funny and wise and you end up really loving him. Anyone who thinks the Empire was a deplorable institution, or just a waste of time, should read his book.



Woody Allen on Woody Allen by Stig Bjorkman (Faber, £8.99)

Considering the fact that their relationship atomised during the interviews for this film-by-film retrospective, Woody Allen is academically objective about Mia Farrow: "a good actress ... very photogenic, very beautiful on screen". Faced with an informed inquisitor, Allen is fascinating about his extensive oeuvre and cinema in general. But his irony has rusted – at one point he says, completely seriously: "I'm very generous."



In Search of Tusitala by Gavin Bell (Picador, £6.99)

In 1888, Robert Louis Stevenson bowed his head before "the romance of destiny" and set sail for the South Seas. One hundred years on, fellow Scot and romantic Gavin Bell goes in search of his own treasure island. An exhilarating read that finds Gavin Bell (and Stevenson) pounded by monster waves, shivering on "accursed" beaches and uneasily recalling a time "when the living ate the dead".



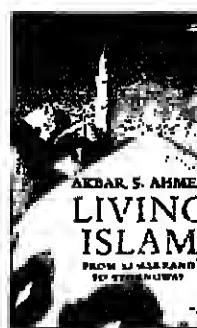
Age of Extremes 1914-1991 by Eric Hobsbawm (Abacus, £9.99)

Hobsbawm triumphantly negotiates the home stretch of a historical quartet which has explored modern times (from 1789) with consummate erudition. In this massive conclusion – an ideal desert island choice for scope and stimulation – he adopts a broadly thematic approach. More about ideas than personalities, the book explores the three great phases of our century: catastrophe, post-war boom and current uncertainty.



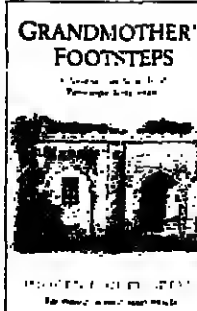
Alec Guinness by Garry O'Connor (Sceptre, £6.99)

It always seems a little impolite for biographers of the still living to pontificate too seriously on the psychological make-up of their subjects. In this most recent hagiography, Alec Guinness is painted as a man obsessed by his illegitimate origins, hungry for acceptance and uneasy with the "feminine within". But if you can skip the amateur psychoanalysis, there are some nice lurid anecdotes to be gleaned.



Living Islam by Akbar S. Ahmed (Penguin/BBC, £6.99)

Akbar Ahmed stresses the enlightened basis of this burgeoning faith – which is now embracing a billion in highly diverse societies. His analysis of the Rushdie case is instructive, yet he fails to address many concerns. Why should Muslim women have to embrace the "modesty" that Ahmed blithely accepts on their behalf? His explanation of the brutal punishments inflicted by a small number of regimes is sketchy and unconvincing.



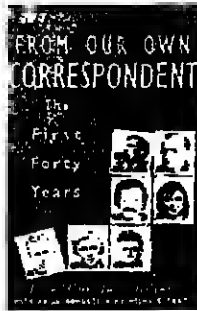
Grandmother's Footsteps by Imogen Lycett Green (Pan, £5.99)

With her helmet-head of silver hair and legs like a grand piano's, Penelope Betjeman was every bit as substantial a figure to her grandchildren as their grandfather was to the outside world. When she died at the age of 73 on a Himalayan mountain-side, her granddaughter decided to relive her last journey to her beloved "Injer". A spirited book that remembers a woman, who, if this were E.M. Forster, would be Mrs Moore.



Waiting for the Dark, Waiting for the Light by Ivan Klima (Granta, £5.99)

Distanced by his lens, Czech cameraman Pavel observes the events of 1989: demonstrations, speeches and the collapse of atrophied authority. He carries a film in his head, a Tarkovsky-like narrative of repression and escape, but it comes no nearer being made after the Velvet Revolution. Laced with black humour, this former dissident's novel about fallibility and vacillation is much in tune with our times.



From Our Own Correspondent edited by Misha Glenny (Pan Books, £9.99)

Radio 4 listeners may be surprised to hear that *From Our Own Correspondent* has been running for 40 years. This collection from the series includes such gems as Gerald Priestland reporting from inside a pantry in Ragoon and Stephen Jessel on the disposal of Parisian dog shit: but whether it's 1955 or 1993, the BBC correspondent's tone of measured good sense and understated emotion remains uncannily unchanged.



The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes by Michael Mason (Oxford, £8.99)

Mason proposes that the powerful 19th-century urge to take the pleasure out of sex (which he terms "anti-sensualism") had secular, even radical, origins rather than a religious cause. There was also a host of individuals, some engagingly cranky, who opposed the prevailing orthodoxy. An absorbing subject, scrupulously researched, but marred by Mason's overly scholastic style and abstruse arguments.



The Priest: A Gothic Romance by Thomas M. Disch (Orion, £5.99)

In the Roman Catholic church of Thomas M. Disch's imagination, priests ritually molest altar boys, kidnap young girls from abortion clinics and hire hoods to do their dirty work – they also like to hang out with really satanic tattoo artists. An unsteady mix of Lewis's *The Monk* and Puzo's *The Godfather*, but so absorbingly told you don't even have to have your doubts about the Catholic Church to embrace it.

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OK, so they're cute. But llamas have their uses

By Martin Whittaker



Paul and Judy Rose, three llamas and a goat

Photograph: Alexander Caminada

Eleven years ago Paul and Judy Rose were out in Peru backpacking. As they sat outside a hotel admiring a view of the mountains, a llama wandered up and sat next to them. And so a great love affair was born.

Today in the steep-sided valley behind their Cotswold home, they have one of the highest herds of llamas in Europe. Judy stares pointedly at husband Paul and says, "I think somebody got a bit carried away."

The Roses, of Temple Guiting, Gloucestershire, have more than 60 llamas, which they keep for breeding. The couple have grown accustomed to the sound of squealing brakes as trippers stop and reverse for another look.

"Most of the villagers are fascinated by them," says Paul, 47. "If they have weekend visitors they'll bring them to have a look. But some of the older people think it's all very strange."

Llamas certainly look strange, especially a herd of them in a Cotswolds field. They're very attentive, watching every move you make with big doe eyes. Occasionally they make a faint,

high-pitched moaning sound. Judy Rose says they take little looking after. "If there's not much grass, we supplement a bit of concentrate - a sort of llama mix with the minerals they need."

"They come from Peru where there are huge extremes in temperature, so most of the time they're fine outside. We've had one heavy snow when we put the new mums away, but they don't have to have shelter - only in very harsh conditions like a blizzard."

The Roses wince when asked the question they most often hear. Don't llamas spit at you?

"Ask anybody about llamas," says Judy, "and all you hear is, 'Oh yes, they're the animals that spit.' We really have to overcome this misconception."

"They're a herd animal with a pecking order," adds Paul. "If any of them try to change that order they'll spit at each other. But they hardly ever spit at people."

"They're very gentle and intelligent - and fun. In the morning they'll all be sat down and they won't just be anywhere. They'll either be all in a straight line or in a circle, or some sort of very geometric formation. And if you

see them in a line it's very often by size - it's rather curious."

They obtained their first breeding pair when they moved from London nine years ago and bought the manor house in Temple Guiting and 15 acres of land. There were no "Teach Yourself Llama Farming" books, so they learnt as they went along.

Apart from the llamas being much in demand at village fetes, the Roses sell them in Britain and abroad, male llamas starting at £500. Paul Rose admits they are a hobby run riot - the day job is running a publishing company - but he believes llamas are more than just a passing fad. He is keen to promote them as a farm animal, but has had a negative response from farmers.

"One of the problems with them is that you can't breed up quickly. With ostriches you can make yourself a financial plan - that this year you'll have so many eggs and then next year it will multiply to such and such. Llamas only have one baby a year, and not every year. I still think they're a long-term commercial proposition, but I'd say very long term."

They're eaten in South America, but here they're too expensive to make rearing them for meat viable. So what exactly are llamas good for?

The British Camelids Limited Owners and Breeders Association has some 200 members, who own around 2,000 llamas nationally. To many, they're simply nice to have around, to keep the horse company and show at game fairs. Some have found other uses. Retired turf contractor Mike Spooner and his wife Jennifer offer visitors llama-trekking trips on the South Downs in summer.

"It's mostly a weekend occupation," says Mrs Spooner, who keeps eight of the animals. "We've found it very popular, particularly with people who come from London and want to do something a bit different."

"Llamas are very sure-footed. Adults can carry 100lb and because they have small feet with a leathery pad, they don't cut up the paths like heavier animals."

Adults can carry 100lb and because they have small feet with a leathery pad, they don't cut up the paths like heavier animals. One farmer who thinks so is Jamie Freeman, from Headcorn in Kent. He had a terrible problem with foxes - one year he lost between 30 and 40 lambs.

Then he read an article extolling the virtues of llamas as guards. So Jamie bought a llama called Lawrence from the Roses two years ago.

"After that I didn't get any problems. Llamas mark their territories with their dung and then stake out the field. If a fox comes into a field the llama will scare him away by walking up and staring him out. They can use their back legs, and will spit, but that's a last resort."

Another use for llamas, and their cousins alpacas, is the fibre from their coats. It is much softer and finer than wool and because each strand is hollow, garments made from it are very warm.

Retired jeweller Peter Knowles-Brown, who farms 1,000 acres near Moffat in Scotland, keeps llamas and is convinced they offer a commercial future for him.

"I'm a hill farmer - it's just sheep on a very limited income, and with the threat of subsidies going, two-thirds of my income will disappear. I have to find alternative farming."

"Llamas are fantastic farm animals. I have 35 llamas and from them I reckon I could get the

same income as I can out of 500-odd sheep."

Members of the British Camelids association pool their fibre together in 50 kilo loads. They are turned into yarn then into sweaters and cloth.

So far the use of llama fibre to make garments in Britain has been very small scale. And according to Dr Angus Russell of the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute in Aberdeen, it's likely to stay that way.

"We have come to the conclusion that fibre is not a viable option for UK farmers. I don't think the fibre from llamas or alpacas is of a sufficiently high quantity to attract the price necessary to make it commercial. The cost of keeping them would outweigh the value of the fibre."

"But there's no doubt they're well suited to conditions in the UK; they survive in some pretty tough parts of the country."

"Most of the people who keep them are pretty well-heeled. If they want to have the company of llamas there's nothing wrong with that. They're super animals - and there are many worse ways to spend money."

A little local trouble

A weekly round-up of rural rows

An unusually large fox has been killed in Dyfed after being linked to 15 sheep deaths in two weeks. Farmers at Tregaron feared the animal massacring their sheep might have been a big cat, but this was disproved when it was shot.

One of them, Ednyfed Jones, said: "The record for the heaviest fox in Britain is 27lbs. This one was 21lbs, and farmers in the area have never seen a fox so big." Since the fox's death, there have been no further reports of sheep killings.

Untreated sewage may still be leaking into a river in Ceredigion, four years after Welsh Water promised to fit their treatment works with an early warning device. The company admitted "minor pollution" of River Ceredigion in 1991, but locals say that the problem continues. Plaid Cymru has had water samples analysed and found bacteria connected with human sewage, such as E.coli and faecal streptococci. However, Welsh Water said that the bacteria do not necessarily come from a sewage plant.

A farmer near Leeds was fined £6,000 as a result of an incident when a small boy fell into a vat of sheep dip on his farm. The dip contains organophosphate insecticide, which has been linked to health problems among farmers, and three-year-old Ryan Ellis was kept in intensive care for four days after the accident in April.

Every time the report mentioned death-watch beetle, it seemed to intensify the menace by quoting its Latin name



DUFF HART-DAVIS

It is not every day that one has to run up a chainsaw in a tight corner near the ceiling of one's sitting room, with exposed electric cables hanging out above and below. But desperate problems demand desperate solutions.

I should love to know how old our farmhouse is. We reckon 300 years at least, and a visiting dowser, as he swung his pendulum in the kitchen, once got a message that building had started in 1681.

When we bought the place 10 years ago, three centuries of settlement had left the house without a single upright wall or right-angle corner. In particular, subsidence had played havoc with the windows in the western end. Some of the stone mullions had lurched to the right, some to the left, and the coating of pebbledash stucco, put on as a weathershield maybe 50 years ago, had cracked and bowed.

In short, the house looked awful, and we vowed one day to put things right. Now at last we have started - and, sure enough, the old building has struck back.

The lintels above the windows were once baulks of oak four inches thick and 12 wide. Removal of stonework and plaster revealed that they are now largely powder.

I had always understood that if your house is infested with death-watch beetle, in the still watches of the night you can hear a faint clicking noise as the little brutes chew their way through beams or knock their heads against wood as a signal to their mates. Well - for 10 years we had listened acutely and heard nothing whatsoever, so it was an unpleasant surprise to discover what a feast they had made of our timbers.

Of course, it is possible that they quit or died while Queen Victoria was still on the throne. Nevertheless, at some stage they had concentrated their efforts on a most vulnerable spot, where a main beam that carries the living room ceiling rests on a lintel over a window.

Not only had the lintel been pulverised: the end of the beam had also been chewed into dust. With decay so advanced, there was a real chance that if we had not taken remedial action soon, the ceiling might suddenly have come down.

The immediate answer was to install a forest of Acropops, the wind-up supports so beloved of builders. There was one in the cellar, floor to ceiling; another directly on top of it in the sitting room, ditto; two in the window opening - and for several nights we scarcely dared breathe in our bedroom above.

What finally drove us out was the searing stink of the insecticide with which a specialist firm injected the surviving beams. Every time the inspector's report mentioned death-watch beetle, it seemed to intensify the menace by quoting in brackets the

Latin name, *Xestobium rufovillosum*.

Not all our discoveries have been so traumatic. One is that the main roof used to be mansard - that is, more steeply pitched at the bottom than at the top, with a bend in the middle. We also found that in the walls above the bedroom windows mice had laid in a store of walnuts, whose shells are now as desiccated as anything that was found in Tutankhamun's tomb. How they got the nuts in there remains a mystery, for the walls are two feet thick.

After six weeks of unspeakable dust and increasingly cold draughts, the new window-surrounds are in place. The mullions and drip-moulds, cut from a quarry near Bath, look beautifully sharp and solid. All we lack now are actual windows.

And that episode with the power saw? Ah, yes: needless to say, the one slab of oak that we found in pristine condition protruded into a space needed for the end of a new concrete lintel. Enter yours truly with his Suhl Wood Boss. In the confined space, the noise and fumes were appalling, but I managed to take off six inches of oak without touching either stone or electric cable.

When everything is finished, the house will look infinitely better. The whole structure at one end will be stronger, and we shall sleep more soundly, secure in the knowledge that our chances of dropping into the sitting room at dead of night have been much reduced.

But I have a nasty feeling that *Xestobium rufovillosum* is, or has been, grinding its teeth in many other places, and that our present upheaval will prove merely the first of several similar earthquakes.



Where in Britain do people live the most satisfying - or unsatisfying - lives? Read our unique survey into the quality of life

Hot to trot: the bridled passions of 'The Other Pony Club', where equestrianism of a very different kind is on offer

Plus: children's books, how to belly dance and how Torvill met Dean

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



The previous owner of Kate and John Dyson's garden was an elderly vegetarian who did not believe in killing things. As a result, they inherited a jungle. Photograph: Geraint Lewis

Something a little mysterious

WORKSHOP The Dysons have a problem with the bottom of their garden. Anna Pavord advises

"We have been working on our garden for 16 years, gradually turning it from an overgrown jungle into an informal place where the family can relax. There is one part we still have to tackle and that is the bottom of the garden round the old shed – used as a munitions factory by the local ladies of Barnes during the First World War. They made shells there. It is covered with an old and wonderful wisteria that rampages nearly to the top of a large poplar tree beside it. The garden boundary is an 18th-century wall of mellow brick. Between the end of the shed and the wall is a dark corner shaded by a high holly tree which is protected by a preservation order."

"Our problem is to work out how to plant this area. It has for ages been used as the compost and bonfire corner. As the wall is only a few feet away from our next-door neighbour, we have moved the bonfire and compost heap, thinking them a bit unneighbourly where they were. This opens up quite a large space, where there are all sorts of possibilities: ferns, a collection of shade-tolerant plants, something a bit mysterious. What would suit it best?"

Kate Dyson and her husband, John, live in a tall house looking over the river at Barnes, in south-west London. The garden is all at the back of the house, about 25ft wide and six times as long. The boundary on the south side turns in a dog leg so that the bottom of the garden is a good 15ft wider than the top. The bottom boundary, as Mrs Dyson mentioned in her letter is formed by a magnificent old brick wall of 1720, at the moment rather overpowered by ivy.

The previous owner left the house in her will to the Society of Elderly Vegetarians. I thought this must be a Beachcomber invention, but the Dysons assure me it is not. Miss Doubleday, the elderly vegetarian in question, had lived in the Barnes house all her life and did not believe in killing things. The Dysons inherited a jungle with the bones of a late Victorian sunken garden buried deep within it. Crawling on their hands and knees through the undergrowth, they found the munitions hut, complete with patriotic flags, rise-and-fall lights, maps and boxes of earphones. A family of foxes lives under it now.

Despite the 16 years of clearing, the garden still has a dark, secretive air. It is richly planted with old roses and delphiniums, hollyhocks and geraniums, with big trees rising around the boundaries. Close to the house is a birch and in the far right-hand corner, an ash. The corner that the Dysons want to tackle is guarded by a superb tall holly. If you creep under its branches, you come to the empty corner where the bottom wall meets the left-hand boundary. It is hidden from the rest of the garden and I felt something should be happening there – a grotto perhaps or a strange obelisk – that would be a surprise and a pleasure to find after the long, meandering walk from the back of the house. Mrs Dyson has an antique shop, so might be able to put her hand on the odd grotto or crumbling stone statue.

The holly, a fabulous tree, needed some expert trimming, to make it more of a lure and less of a barrier. The Dysons had had the top taken out of it, leaving some stringy branches sprouting awkwardly from the truncated crown. If these were cut out, it would enhance the profile of the tree. The canopy of leaves could be lifted a little, too, so that, without losing any of the mystery, it would be easier to get under the tree into the secret corner.

The way to lift the canopy of a tree is not to whizz round the bottom with a chain saw, like a chef trimming pastry from a tart, but to run your hand up each individual branch and cut it where it joins on to a larger branch. In this way, you retain the natural, drooping, fringed outline that is characteristic of holly. A good arboriculturist goes with the flow of a tree. A bad one reduces everything – ash, elm, oak, holly, to interchangeable butchered blobs.

To the right of the holly tree lay the mounds left by the bonfires and compost heaps that used to occupy the area. They looked like what they were. They should be levelled out and the bonfire ash used round the borders in the rest of the garden. But looking at this specific area that the Dysons were wanting to tackle, you could see that in fact it was no good thinking about that corner in isolation.

Whatever went on in the corner had to work with whatever was to happen along the rest of the bottom of the garden.

The Dysons were planning an island bed, with summer flowers on the right, where the garden was quite open and sunny. The holly was the only dominant feature on the left, together with the old brick wall. I suggested they stripped the ivy off the wall (there is plenty of undergrowth elsewhere in the garden for wildlife) and used it for plants which would be bold enough to sing out, even from the distance of the kitchen, on the first floor of the house.

Taking as the key the holly, at its best from autumn onwards with its shining leaves and berries, the Dysons could orchestrate an autumn and winter crescendo here at the bottom of the garden, throwing a giant-leaved *Pittosporum* at the wall, and facing it through with late-flowering *Fuchsia* clematises and the white-flowered *Solanum jasminoides* 'Album'. In autumn the leaves of the vine turn a fiery scarlet before falling. They would look superb with the holly.

Because of the humming and the composting going on down at the bottom of the garden, there hadn't previously been much room for shrubs, though there was a weary-looking hypericum there. To me, hypericum smells of nothing but bus stations and roundabouts. Out with it, I urged. In with a jagged-leaved mahonia to bloom now with cowslip-scented flowers and perhaps a bold hydrangea, such as *H. serrata* which has leaves as rough as sharkskin, as big as dinner plates. The hydrangea would extend the season backwards a little as it flowers in July and August.

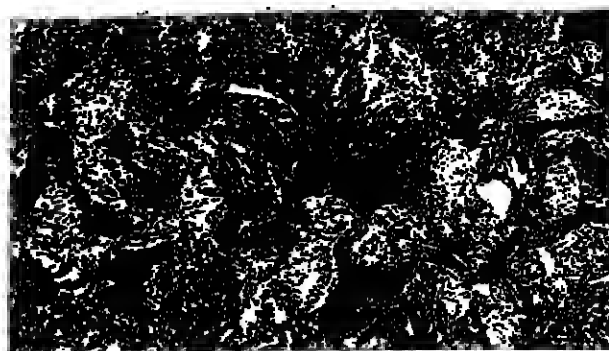
With these two landmark shrubs in place and the vision of the wall behind, clothed in bold climbers, you could begin to see how this space would work. You would wander down through the garden, drawn on initially by the imposing bulk of the ancient wisteria. This ate its original supports long ago and it is now jacked up from underneath with some very nifty carpentry carried out by Mr Dyson.

Coming round the wisteria, you would then be led on towards the holly with the mahonia and the hydrangea grouped to the right of it. There, an informal narrow path would lead past the shrubs and bend round to the left, under the holly, to bring you to the corner shrine. The main path would lift round to the right, run roughly parallel with the bottom boundary and curl itself round the summer island bed.

Since the holly will be taking a fair amount of moisture out of the ground and the soil itself is light and free-draining, the Dysons should not perhaps be too ambitious with their planting between the shrubs and the holly. They could introduce a few ferns, such as polypodies, which would not mind the dry situation. They would give a little height and a great deal of finessence to the scheme. Then they could carpet the ground underneath with masses of bulbs such as snowdrops, scilla and the corns of spring and autumn-flowering cyclamen. The grotto/obelisk would moulder quietly away in its corner, attracting mosses and lichens, perhaps with ivy licking around its feet. Although you would not be able to see it from the house, the Dysons would know it was there – a powerful, hidden secret.

They should be uprooted at dawn

A handful of plants tyrannise British gardens. Diarmuid Gavin organises a coup d'état



Aucuba japonica: why does it look like paint's been thrown at it?

It's like military conscription. A handful of plants which insist on doing national service in a majority of gardens all over the British Isles.

Behind garden walls and fences they lurk, and, in SAS-style operations, they hop over garden boundaries and virtually dig themselves in.

Alternatively, they strike in garden centres. The unsuspecting huyer is wheeling a trolley up and down the aisles. They turn their back for a moment, and in hops a laurel here and a choysa there. And, of course, when you get them home and planted they thrive – unlike many of the carefully chosen specimens you actually wanted.

The other way these plants make their almost miraculous appearances in gardens, is through landscapers and garden designers. It's a bit like that Milk Marketing Board advertisement – cheerful milkmen leading a line of walking bottles to the doorstep. From my own experience in the landscaper's van, I can tell you that these plants have virtually to be tied down, such is their exuberance at the prospect of being planted. Once in the ground their roots spread like wildfire. And even if they are not cared for they thrive, putting on new growth annually at a ferocious rate.

Some of these plants can, from time to time, pleasantly surprise even the most cynical plant snob. But in general, there needs to be a coup d'état. The following plants can be safely banished. Forsythia: it may herald the end of winter, but when you see one in every garden, its dazzling effects wear off. Pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*): This can be a most elegant plant, but more often than not ends up badly used and battered. And have you ever tried to move it? Common laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*): it may do very well in shade but its large glossy green leaves make me want to run for cover. Leyland cypress (*Cupressocyparis leylandii*) plus *Cupressus macrocarpa* and *Griselinia*: These should be whipped out without any explanation. Mind you, perhaps a letter of condolence could be sent to the more choice members of their respective families. *Senecio greyi*: when used

well in an open sunny situation this can be a joy to behold. But more often than not it is lanky and woody and the flowers are sporadic.

Aucuba japonica 'Maculata': a perfectly fine plant, very useful for the shade – if someone didn't always come along and sprinkle it with lots of yellow paint.

Philadelphus: wonderful but totally overused. Vinca major or minor, who cares?

Clematis montana: gets out of control so fast. Wonderful when in flower, but more thought would lead to a better choice, like the 'President'. Variegated poplar: a devastation to the land. This is the one plant that will single-handedly stop an invasion by the Russians. It is deserving of its own scorched earth policy.

But, if we banish these popular favourites, what to replace them with?

Garden centres and nurseries are packed with other choices, some being old foot soldiers while others are fresh young imports.

Common gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) and yew (*Taxus baccata*) have been around for ever and may at first glance appear too ordinary. But both can give great service in the right setting.

Chinese gooseberry (*Actinidia chinensis*) has splashes of cream and pink on its foliage as it matures. Another climber for colour effect is *Hedera helix* 'Buttercup', a variegated ivy which makes a change from 'Goldheart'. The leaves are a good deal smaller, slightly crinkled and have a lot more colour.

Arbutus unedo, the Killarney strawberry tree, is evergreen, hardy and produces its red fruit at this time of the year, while the false acacia (*Robinia*) should not be missed for leaf shape and colour. In midwinter it is hard to beat witch hazel (*Hamamelis mollis*), with its heavily scented yellow flowers, so vivid against its bare wood.

And, lastly, an appeal to replace one of the countryside's finest plants: hawthorn is disappearing with the country's hedgerows. No tree offers such a refuge to our native wildlife.

Diarmuid Gavin is a writer and gardener, and runs the Dublin School of Garden Design

WEEKEND WORK

'Keep your bulbs damp'

Lovers of tender perennials hover at this time of the year with buckets of sand, ashes and peat to heap over the crowns of their favourite plants. This extra protection helps prevent frost damage during winter, but is not always successful. Tender shrubs, particularly evergreens, may need windbreaks built round them. Use broken twigs, straw, bracken or fern fronds. Protect the crowns of globe artichokes with loosely packed straw or bracken. I gather net curtains work well, too, although I've not tried them.

Check that the bulbs you may be forcing inside for early flowers have not dried out. The compost should be damp but not soggy. Outside, tulips should be in the ground now. If you are using them in mixed borders, plant them extra deep.

This way, you are less likely to spear them when forking over the soil. In sheltered areas, sow a row of early peas, choosing a round-seeded variety such as 'Feltham's First'. You could also try a row of broad beans. 'Aquadulce Claudia' is a good choice for planting at this time of the year, but autumn sowing is a gamble. Cloches will provide necessary protection if the weather takes a turn for the worse, but rodents are more difficult to guard against.

Dig over any ground that is clear of crops and plants, leaving the soil in rough clods to be broken down by frost. Continue to cut down and clear away old stems of Michaelmas daisy, goldenrod and perennial verbascum. Mulch thickly round the clumps.

CUTTINGS



Contessa Karin Antonia is a granddaughter of the Arts and Crafts architect Sidney Barnesley who cropped up in connection with Misarden Park and its garden (*Independent*, 5 August). She has pointed out that the family tradition continues with the Edward Barnesley Educational Trust which still trains apprentices and pupils in the Barnesley ways. For details of this Arts and Crafts furniture workshop, contact the trust at Cockshott Lane, Froxfield, Petersfield, Hampshire GU32 1BB (01730 827329).

"Until I read your article on Camppis (*Independent*, 12 August) I had been feeling optimistic, looking for flower buds on my plant every day," writes Pauline Roberts of Long Ashton, Bristol. "It is growing in a barrel against a south wall. About this severe cutting back. How far? What is the advantage of pruning a

camppis drastically if it hasn't flowered? How will it have benefited from its summer growth? I have been hoping that the hot summer might have initiated flower buds in the shoots for next summer."

Campsis flowers on new wood, so the hot summer will not, as Mrs Roberts hoped, have coaxed flower buds for next year out of this year's growth. If you want the campsis to fill more space, you can cut the new growth back by just a third in late winter or early spring. When it has filled all the space that you can let it have, prune the new growth harder, taking it back to within two or three buds of the older wood. This should also be done in late winter or early spring. If the campsis had only one shoot, I would be inclined to cut it down to within six inches of the base this winter, to encourage it to throw more shoots.

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property

The green, green fields of home are under threat: from houses, houses and yet more houses

By Anne Spackman



Sales resistance: there's a glut of property for sale in Lower Earley, Berks, yet there's talk of a thousand more houses being built nearby. Who will buy them? Photograph: John Lawrence

Before the eco-warriors dismantle their tree camps from which they fought such a feisty anti-road campaign, they should look carefully at the land below. It is houses as much as cars which now threaten to destroy the green fields of England.

A new study published this week by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation warns that London, Manchester and the Home Counties face an acute housing shortage due to a larger than expected growth in the numbers of households in these regions. New Government figures suggest household numbers up to the year 2011 have been underestimated by 26 per cent – meaning 737,000 more households. House prices and rents will rise, it says, unless building levels increase to match this new need. The phrase “new town” is being mentioned for the first time in a decade.

This news is likely to be greeted with as much euphoria as alarm. There will be cheers resounding through all those

hundreds of thousands of houses blighted by negative equity. Builders will be throwing up their hard hats at the prospect of customers queuing at the door. The Government will be comforted by the thought of voters in its south-east heartland feeling prosperous once more thanks to the housing market.

However, local planners in the affected areas may not be so happy. Surrey has almost run out of open land that is neither Green Belt nor in a designated Area of Outstanding Beauty. Yet demand for property is predicted to rise by 20 per cent in the next 20 years.

Berkshire is in a similar position. Household numbers are predicted to grow by 25 per cent – an extra 80,000 homes – half of which will have to be accommodated on green field sites. An average development takes 12 houses per acre. That means Berkshire consigning 3,300 one-acre fields to bricks and mortar.

But hang on a minute, you say. There are already thousands of unsold homes on the market,

prices are at best stagnant and at worst falling, and first-time buyers are stubbornly resistant to the lure of owner occupation. Can anyone seriously be suggesting that we concrete over the precious few remaining green fields in south-east England and Manchester just in case a boom looms on the horizon?

The Rowntree researchers accept there is a paradox. The authors of the report are Steve Wilcox and Alan Holmans, the former chief housing economist at the Department of the Environment. These are men who know their sums. “There is a mismatch between the current state of the market and the projections,” Steve Wilcox admits, “but in certain regions the market is going to turn around more rapidly than in others.”

To a certain extent this is already happening. London and the Home Counties have seen house price rises of up to 20 per cent in the past two to three years, while the rest of the country has stagnated. Many of the more up-market developments in

the region are still selling fast, with buyers reserving properties before they have been built.

Rents have also risen, particularly in the capital, as a result of increased demand from young professionals. It is now more expensive to rent a flat in London than to buy one.

The Rowntree report believes this structural change from owning to renting among twenty-somethings has reached a plateau. It coincided with the fall in the birth rate and followed a period in the 1980s when owner-occupation had been brought forward by the boom, resulting in a real hole in the market for smaller properties this decade and long-term negative equity. They believe those renters are now at an age where they will opt for owner-occupation, increasing the numbers of first-time buyers in areas where the rental sector will remain strong.

They explain that as many as 50,000 of the extra households will be immigrants from the European Union and overseas people returning from overseas.

Many of them will be coming here for city-based jobs, again increasing pressure on housing stock in urban areas.

But the greatest additional requirement for housing will be in the rented sector, particularly the social rented sector. With new limits on the definition of homelessness and diminishing levels of cash being given to the Housing Corporation, this is unlikely to be met by the housing associations. Instead of increased provision, the Rowntree authors expect to see higher levels of over-crowding and a rise in real homelessness.

What, then, is to be done? The authors offer little hope to the generation ruined by negative equity. They expect their small flats to switch gradually from the private to the rented sector by the crude and painful mechanism of repossession.

However, Steve Wilcox thinks the Government should act on two other fronts: it should encourage housing associations to renovate old properties currently in owner-occupation, sav-

ing a few fields and releasing some trapped owners while providing some new homes. In addition, it should take a stronger overview of planning in the private sector. If Surrey, Cheshire and Berkshire are too full or too expensive then families will move out to cheaper counties. This means increasing the planning requirement in areas like East Anglia or Lancashire to allow for outward migration.

Others might argue that market forces will take care of that. If people cannot afford to live in Berkshire they will try Wiltshire or Oxfordshire. If there are enough of them, the builders will start building on the land they are currently holding in reserve and the cycle of recovery will be in full swing.

At the moment there is no sign of that. To take Berkshire, the rate of housing starts in the county has fallen from a high of 6,000 in the early to mid 1980s to around 2,300 a year. The Rowntree report would require a level of around 4,000 starts a year.

On the housing estates which

already sprawl across the east of the county For Sale notices are flourishing. Lower Earley, south of Reading, is one of the largest suburban housing developments of the 1980s. The district is served by five estate agents – it was six until last year – and even the most successful is struggling. They can offer you anything from a one-bedroom flat to a four-bedroom detached house. The only shortage is a shortage of buyers. The only houses currently in short supply in Berkshire are period properties in quaint locations. More new housing will do nothing to ease that.

If you stop on top of Junction 11 of the M4 and look north to Lower Earley you see row upon row of tiny modern roof-tops, the 1980's equivalent of a *Coronation Street* landscape. If you turn south you see fields with a few cows. At least, you do now. This is the land which would be earmarked for bricks and mortar. If there are no takers in Lower Earley, will they really find the buyers for a few thousand more new homes across the road?

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Buyers queuing (above) at Galliard Homes' sale of flats (seen below) in County Hall

Lower photograph: Jane Baker

There are no estate agents, no brochures and you have to compete with 2,500 other buyers. Is this the way all property will be sold in the future? By Anne Spackman

One Saturday morning a month ago, the County Hall building in central London looked like Harrods on the first day of the sale. Roy Conway went along the queue offering croissants to those at the front who had been waiting in line for at least two days. What was the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that had enticed them and 2,500 others to the former GLC offices that weekend? The chance to buy a new flat.

It might seem ridiculous that in one of the bleakest years of the property recession, when builders are having to offer buyers ever more lucrative incentives, so many people would queue up to part with their money. But they do and it is because of the singular marketing strategy of the man behind the County Hall development, Roy Conway of Galliard Homes.

Roy Conway used to be a sales and marketing man for Levi Strauss. His expertise is in shifting well-branded goods. When he formed Galliard Homes four years ago he applied the same techniques to selling houses.

When Galliard is launching a development, the company has an advertising blitz, announcing the weekend when the development will go on sale. Nobody can view beforehand, no brochures are sent out, no estate agents are involved. The adverts display the price of the cheapest property, which acts like the fur coat in the Harrods sale.

In the case of County Hall, the "fur coats" were priced at £99,000 for one-bedroom flats and £129,000 for two-bedroom flats. The 4,000 callers who responded to the adverts were told there were only four flats available at that price: if they wanted to get one they would



have to be there early. Just as a market trader pulls a crowd by giving away the first £10 blanket for £5, so Galliard Homes draws buyers with such bargains.

At each sales weekend there are financial advisers and solicitors, so that keen customers can complete a deal on the spot. The flats are pre-valued and normally priced below their valuation so there is no problem securing a mortgage.

At County Hall, Galliard Homes sold more than 100 apartments at prices up to £450,000 in a weekend. Its model of the two vast blocks is awash with red stickers showing more than half the 411 flats have been sold. Not reserved, but actually sold with contracts exchanged. "We don't do reservations," Roy Conway says. "You can make a reservation, but if someone comes along and wants to exchange contracts we will sell it to them and refund your reservation."

One block of 117 flats went in Hong Kong, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, where this is the normal way of buying and selling property. Galliard Homes is about to return with 160 more. Another development of 80 apartments in Oxford was bought by one individual for the Hong Kong market. Roy Conway has now taken four developments to the Far East. "What's nice is that we keep seeing the same faces returning to buy from us again," he says.

So are the buyers getting a bargain or are they simply being wowed by the sell? After all, buying a property is a very serious financial commitment which many people might argue requires more than an hour's reflection.

At their early developments in London's Docklands—like Papermill Wharf, which sold out in a weekend—Galliard could afford to keep prices low because it bought the land at the bottom of the market. "We're not greedy," Roy Conway says. At County Hall, where the location is far more expensive and the specification higher, the company has kept its prices competitive. You can buy a three-bedroom apartment at County Hall for the price of a two-bedroom one in another new block further down the river. Buyers have to weigh up the various factors and work out which suits them best.

Many in the business doubted whether the pile 'em high and sell 'em fast philosophy would work when Galliard went up-market, where the buyers and the product are more sophisticated. To ensure the answer was "yes", Galliard brought in Savills to give marketing advice. "We do our homework," Roy Conway says. Mr Conway has a reputation for

toughness. He is said to bargain down to the last penny over every batch of doors, kitchen units or inch of advertising space he buys. It is one reason why Galliard can keep prices low. Another is that the quick sell is built in as part of the costing. "Holding on to property is a very expensive hobby," Mr Conway points out.

Despite his hard reputation, Mr Conway is an affable, modest man with a rather old-fashioned attitude to business. He buys British whenever possible. He considers his 30 staff part of the family rather than short-term workers. They are expected to work hard, as he does, but he is not part of the new 60-hour a week mentality. "I'm 57, if I get tired I take a day off. We all share the same philosophy," he says. "We want to succeed—but not at any price. We enjoy what we do. We have a good laugh."

Despite the success of Galliard Homes—it is expected to go public shortly in a reverse takeover of Harmony Property Group—Mr Conway still lives in a bungalow in an outer London suburb, where he is building an annex for his wife's mother. He has two holidays a year and he likes his golf, but that's about it.

Galliard has been lucky that County Hall has appeared on the market just as the South Bank's time has come. The Lottery has just come up with funding for the new Tate Gallery, the Globe Theatre is set to open, the Manhattan Loft Corporation is creating its largest warehouse development downstream at Bankside.

But there is no doubt Galliard's sales strategy is a crucial element of the development's success. Is this going to be the way more houses are sold in the future?



ANNE SPACKMAN

Newbury, the Berkshire town that saw property prices fall 30 per cent when the boom ended, is leading the way out of recession.

The latest Property Watch survey by Strutt & Parker shows prices in the area rising steeply as a result of heavy demand for the few houses which come up for sale. Seven out of the last 11 sales in its Newbury office were agreed within a month.

Strutt & Parker compares sales of houses in three categories: a three-bedroom cottage in half an acre, a five-bedroom house in two acres and a nine-bedroom listed house in 17.5 acres. In the five-bedroom category, its Newbury office has seen prices rise from just over £400,000 in 1993 to £450,000 in 1994 and £500,000 this year.

St Albans in Hertfordshire and Lewes in Sussex have been the other strong performers in 1995, with the market being led by families moving out of London. Harrogate reports strong demand for country cottages and Exeter for period family houses. Five of the last six properties sold by Strutt & Parker's Exeter office have gone for more than the guide price.

The one region that has still not recovered from the body-blow it took in the recession is East Anglia. In Norwich, agents say house prices are the same now as

nine years ago, continuing the fall that began in 1990. In Ipswich, prices for properties over the £300,000 mark have fallen by as much as 10 per cent this year, though demand remains strong in the £150,000 to £250,000 range.

For What It's Worth

The one region where the graph of property prices has consistently fallen since the boom is the north west of England. Agents in the region report a crisis of confidence among home-owners. They say first-time buyers are preferring new homes to second-hand properties, which are consequently continuing to fall in price. Andrew Steele of Black Horse Agencies in Burnley, writing in the monthly report of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, says: "Very low priced terraces under £10,000 are selling well to investors. Terraces above £20,000 are very slow. Low priced semis between £40,000 and £50,000 sell well. All other property is difficult unless discounted prices are available—everyone has to negotiate."

Who's Moving

A shark hangs from the ceiling of Sam Neal's penthouse flat, possibly a souvenir from one of his

movies such as *Heavenly Creatures*. The actor is leaving his apartment, converted from a Victorian piano factory in Kentish Town, north London. Apart from the shark, it has a vast reception room with five windows, a gallery study, roof terrace, three bedrooms and two bathrooms. It is being sold by John D Wood in St John's Wood (0171-722 5556) with a guide price of £325,000.

Househunter

Strete, south Devon



The 18th-century cob-and-stone Thatch Cottage is at the end of a row of three in the village of Strete on the cliffs overlooking Start Bay, five miles down the coast from Dartmouth. It is basically a well-kept two-up, two-down, but with the luxury addition of an upstairs bathroom and a downstairs utility room. The garden, like most of the rooms, has a sea view. Marchand Petit in Kingsbridge (01548 857588) is asking £79,950.

INDEPENDENT READERS' OFFER

2 Miniature Standard Hollies for only £21.95



Hollies with their very beautiful leaves are among the most ornamental of shrubs. They are superb for growing in pots or tubs on a patio or sheltered balcony and will thrive in sun or partial shade. The plants have 40cm tall stems with a "ball" of colourful foliage on top. To keep shrubs dwarf and to maintain shape, prune between April and August. You can grow them in containers at least 25cm wide or plant them in good soil in the border. The two varieties are: "Blue Angel" with glossy green leaves in summer which take on a bluish purple colour with the approach of colder weather and winter. The main stem also has a distinctly bluish winter tinge. "Alaska" with glossy, spiny leaves and white edges. Both varieties are self pollinating and will produce a good crop of red berries in winter from the late summer flowers. You can get both Blue Angel and Alaska with full cultural instructions for £21.95, including packaging and postage. Please allow 21 days for delivery.

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shopping

six of the best knee-length coats



1 Warehouse, £120
A brilliant shape that looks quite luxurious. The wide collar and deep pockets give it a Seventies feel. Can be worn belted or unbelted. Those dedicated followers of fashion will know that camel is still a hot colour in many stores so a wide variety of styles are available. From branches of Warehouse nationwide. Enquiries: 0181-910 1400



2 Oasis, £89.99
Lemon yellow long line jacket with double pocket. Light enough to be worn with nothing underneath or can be teamed with a matching shift dress, pencil skirt or trousers from Oasis. The double pocket hints at an old style Crombie, although the colour and cut are feminine. Also available in black. From Oasis, 292 Regent Street, W1 and selected branches. Enquiries: 0171-436 0474



3 Betty Jackson, £499
Wool and mohair mix bristle-bair coat. This double-breasted jacket is softened by the details of gathers at the shoulder and the back. This bright orange version offers a refreshing shot of colour for those of us who get drab over winter, but it also comes in grey, for those who don't. From Betty Jackson, 311 Brompston Road, London SW3. Enquiries: 0171-589 7884



4 Hobbs, £169.99
A oaty little raspberry coat in 100 per cent wool. This has a very flattering shape, which will suit most people, and comes both in pastel and bright shades. The rounded collar and gilt buttons give it a slightly Queen Mum appeal. Altogether very smart, and practical, too. From branches of Hobbs nationwide. Enquiries: 0171-586 5550



5 Sportmax, £358
Single-breasted coat with fake fur collar, in 80 per cent wool and 20 per cent nylon. Very warm and sensuous, it comes in a beautiful watery blue. This winter's coats are either soft pastel, vibrant brights or camel. Now is not the time to be buying safe, your winter coat should be a show stopper. From branches of Whistles and Selfridges. Enquiries: 0171-287 3434



6 Jigsaw, £145
Pastel pink wool-mix coat with a deep collar. A flattering shape that gently scoops in at the waist. This jacket is both neat and warm enough to cut out the winter chill. From Jigsaw branches nationwide. Enquiries: 0181-878 8443

Photographs:
Andrew Lamb
Stylist:
Charlie Harrington



Stephanie and Lydia, who pack the food for Panzer's luxury hampers

Photograph: John Rasmussen

Your feast is in the post

Armchair cooks should start preparing Christmas food now. By Serena Mackesy

There is one thing that makes Christmas stand out for the epicures among us and that is that it is the one time of year when gluttony is not only acceptable but is a positive virtue. The annual explosion of turkey and pudding has, since the demise of the servant culture, been limited by the strength of the individual's will to spend time in supermarkets. But things are looking up. The dedicated gourmand can nowadays fill the larder with every accoutrement of a lavish Yule without straying from the safety of the armchair. The day of luxury by mail order has come.

With it comes the death of the average dinner. Everyone knows that free-range is best, and the resurgence of rarer turkey breeds such as the bronze and the Norfolk Black has muted our taste for the white-feathered inhabitant of the freezer marts. Now everyone can get to a barnyard.

And, of course, if your palate has wearied of white meat, the choice of alternative fodder of a more outré kind is almost overwhelming. Your Druidic board can groan beneath the weight of wild boar, ostrich, smoked salmon steaks, bisoo or peacock, hand-thrown chocolates, firm, ripe cheeses and hampers of jellies and pickles and ruby wines.

Or maybe you think all this excess is a little tasteless. In which case you should try something low-key, like Seldom Seen Farm's Three-Bird Roast. This consists of a goose stuffed with a chicken stuffed with a pheasant, the whole thing layered up with spiced pork and orange. You'll be glad to know that everything has been boned beforehand.

POULTRY
Derek Kelly Turkeys Ltd, Springate Farm, Bicknacre Rd, Danbury, Essex CM3 4E (01245 223581) 3kg free-range bronze turkeys £30.39 inc. delivery; 3kg white £28.27. Last orders 15 Dec.

Eastbrook Farm Organic Meats: High St, Sharnham, Oxfordshire SN6 8AA (01793 790460). Turkeys from luxurious surroundings. Organic white or bronze £7.16/kg inc. delivery; free-range, £5.95/kg. Last orders 8 Dec. Also duck, geese, gammon and organic hampers.

Copas Brothers, Lower Mount Farm, Loog Acre, Cookham, Berkshire SL6 9EE (01628 529595). Free-range bronze £5.20/kg and barn-reared white turkeys £4.70/kg. Also geese £7/kg. Delivery £10. Last orders 14 Dec.

The Hereford Duck Co, Trelough House, Wormbridge, Herefordshire HR2 9DH (01981 570767). Specialise in their own free-range, organic strain. £2.15/lb. Average bird 4-6lb. Delivery £10 for orders under £50. Last orders 21 Dec.

Seldom Seen Farm, Billesdon, Leicestershire LE17 9FA (0116 259 6742). Free-range geese £2.50/lb. Three-bird roast (see introduction): £4.75/lb for an average 10-12lb package. Courier delivery £12. Last orders 10 Dec.

Goodman's Geese, Walsgrave Farm, Great Witley, Worcester WR6 6JJ (01299 896272). Free-range, grass and corn-fed geese £5.95/kg; bronze turkeys £4.60/kg. Courier delivery £11, or two birds for £15. Last orders 25 Nov.

GAME
Fletchers of Auchtermuchty, Reediehill, Auchtermuchty, Fife KY14 7HS (01337 828369). Home-reared venison, hung to perfection. Boneless haunch

£6.20/lb, casserole cuts £3.98/lb, sausages, haggis and other delicacies. Last orders by end Nov to allow for hanging. Delivery £8.95 for orders under £80. Very small orders by first-class post.

The Game Larder, Ryshett Farm, Chessington KT9 2NQ (01372 749000). Locally stalked roe and fallow deer £2.30-9.80/lb and partridge £5.80 (French £3.60), plus woodcock, pheasant, wild duck, grouse and wild boar £5.20-7.60/lb. Bung to order. Bisoo £10.50-£20.20/lb, ostrich £18/lb, emu £18/lb, crocodile £9.60/lb, kangaroo £4.90/lb. Delivery £10 up to £100. Last orders 19 Dec, but allow for hanging time.

Barrow Boar, Foster's Farm, South Barrow, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7LN (01963 440315). Wild boar £4.50-£13.20/500g. Kid, ostrich and oven-ready peacock at £5.49/500g. Delivery £8.50; two weeks notice if possible.

Loch Fyne Smokehouse, Clachan Farm, Ardkinglas, Cairndow, Argyll PA26 8BH (01499 600217). The famous Loch Fyne kippers, £11.52 for 10 pairs; smoked salmon £19.25 side unsliced; fresh oysters £4.80 dozen. Delivery £5.95. Last orders 15 Dec.

Summer Isles Foods, Achiltibuie, Ullapool, Highlands & Islands IV26 2YG (01854 622353). Smoked salmon tasting pack (four types) £17.50; two smoked salmon steaks for £9.50. Join the smoked salmon club and get a different product monthly for six months for £60. Last orders 2 Dec.

CHEESE
The Fine Cheese Co, 29/31 Walcot St, Bath BA1 5BN (01225 483407). More than 100 British cheeses. Next day delivery £6.95. Last orders 20 Dec.

Hamish Johnston, 48 Northcote

Rd, London SW11 1PA (0171-738 0741). Fine range of British, French and Irish cheeses. Delivery by first-class post; orders preferably by 5 Dec.

Neal's Yard Dairy, 17 Short's Gardens, London WC2H 9AT (0171-379 7646). A broad range of farm cheeses. Try a selection for £20-25 plus £6 for courier delivery. Last orders 15 Dec.

Paxton and Whitfield, 93 Jermyn St, SW1Y 6JE (0171-930 0259). Whole Stilton £75, baby Stilton £27.50, British farmhouse cheese selection £15. Last orders 15 Dec.

PUDDINGS
Anton Mosimann, 11b West Halkin St, London SW1X 8JL (01628 782254). Light version of traditional pudding, suitable for vegetarians and 227 calories a portion. Add brandy butter, 737g pudding, £9.99 p.p. Last orders 15 Dec.

Fortnum & Mason, 181 Piccadilly, London W1 (0171-734 8040). 1lb pud is £4.95; 4lb monster including ceramic bowl is £18.95; 2lb vegetarian pud £8.50. Delivery £4-£4.50. Last orders 8 Dec.

Marcel Bros, Cobbett and Son, Unit 7 129 Coldharbour Lane, London SE5 9NY (0171-346 0046). Bespoke Christmas pudding of the traditional variety, 900g £9.95. Last orders 18 Dec.

CAKES
Traquair House, Innerleithen, Borders EH44 6PW (01896 830323). Ancient house and brewery produce its own spice cake: a light, bread-like mixture of treacle, spices and ale.

Meg Rivers Cakes, Middle Tysoe, Warwickshire (01295 688101). Bakery specialising in seasonal concoctions; Christmas cake is a rich fruit with brandy.

CHOCOLATES
Charbonnel and Walker, 1 The Royal Arcade, 28 Old Bond St, London W1X 4BT (0171-491 0939). Christmas boxes decorated with braid and lurex - all sizes from £8 for two to £230 for 10lb.

Norwood House Chocolate, Norwood Bottom Farm, Norwood Bottom, Otley, Yorks LS21 2RA (01423 322230). The home of the Chocolate Society. Box of bittersweet chocolate nuts £12.50; handmade boo-bons £3.45 for four, £31.96 for 50.

HAMPERS
Lightwater Village Gift Services, North Stainley, Ripon, N Yorks HG34 3HT (01765 635321). Large selection of foodie treats from £10.99 for a basket of red wine and Wensleydale to £145 for a groaning conglomeration of everything including cherries in kirsch. Last orders 8 Dec.

Panzer's, 13-19 Circus Rd, St John's Wood NW8 6PB (0171-435 0165/0171-722 8596). Epicurean luxury, from the Paddington at £42 (includes smoked salmon, brandy butter, merlot, pretzels) to the aptly-named Hedonist at £205 (caviar, foie gras, champagne, you name it).

James and John Graham, Market Square, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 7BS (01768 862281). "Hampers without melon balls!" Rich, meaty and old-fashioned country delicacies. From £35 in a box to £320 in a wicker basket. Last orders 15 Dec.

Presents of Mind Ltd, Berwick Barns, Terling Hall, Hatfield Peverel, Essex CM3 2EY (01245 381220). Wine selections and hampers strong on tithes and posh condiments from £25.90-£500. Hampers made to order with luxury items such as foie gras and caviar. Last orders 15 Dec.



bazaar

Good thing

Crown tea cosy, £14.95

This year we've had crown candlesticks, crown air fresheners, now a crown tea cosy. This would jolly up your breakfast table (along with the matching egg cosies, £3.95), or alternatively you could wear it as a warm winter hat. From the National Portrait Gallery's mail-order catalogue, full of things like Elizabeth 1 Fruit Bonbons, and Lord Byron fridge magnets. To order, telephone: 0171-306 0055, extension 280 during work hours

Mad thing

Shaving Fun Ken, £10

We've had all those years of girl dolls that cry, vomit and wet themselves, now a boy doll that does something. Ken comes with shaving foam and razor; just spread the foam on his chin, wield the razor, and watch the beard disappear. Leave him at room temperature, and back it sprouts. Hours of fun for everyone except Ken. From good toyshops, or call Mattel for stockists (01724 798822)



Which... Christmas fair?

Suddenly there is a rush of Christmas fairs and sales, offering presents seriously more fun than those found in John Lewis sock department. Over the next weeks, Bazaar will list some of the best

This weekend:
ALNWICK, NORTHUMBERLAND Crafts at Christmas All sorts of crafty gifts for sale at Alnwick Castle, today and tomorrow, 10.30am-5pm. Admission £1.50.

WHITCHFORD, WARWICKS The Whichford Pottery is holding a special sale of its splendid terracotta pots. With daily demonstrations, and refreshments at weekends. At Whichford, near Shipston-on-Stour (01608 694416). Today to 3 December, 9am-5pm.

DITCHLING, SUSSEX A show of locally made pots, silverware, cutlery, jewellery, quilts, dolls and more. At Ditchling Village Hall and St Margaret's School, on the Lewes Road. Today and tomorrow, 10am-5pm. Admission 50p. Refreshments, too.

LONDON Dazzle Slightly more pricey work by 80 European jewellery designers, watchmakers, fabric designers, etc, costing from £20-£2,000. At the Royal National Theatre, South Bank, London SE1. From today to 6 January.

From Tuesday
LONDON Christmas at St Christopher's Escape the Oxford Street crowds and choose from papier-mâché sculptures, pottery, wood carvings, designer knitwear, hand-woven cushions, etc. At 30-31 St Christopher's Place, London W1. From 21 Nov to 23 December, 10.15am-6pm, Mon-Sun. Till 7pm on Thursdays.

John 10:50

Honest, unpretentious English country pottery has finally made it to the saleroom. By John Windsor

DON SPENCER ANTIQUES
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 (01926) 407 989
MOBILE 08365 25755
Old desks purchased



Illustration: BILL WORTHINGTON

this weekend

Piper calls the tune

Unicorn Arts Theatre has given the story of The Pied Piper a thoroughly modern twist. Amid a rainbow-coloured set, depicting cock-eyed medieval houses, a group of holiday-makers arrives to find a tourist trade cover-up. Yes... their holiday destination is infested with rats. The pipe gets handed to a boy with the vision to see through the sleaze. And you can guess the rest. This is not an "its behind you!" pantomime but a family Christmas show in the style of a Gilbert and Sullivan

operetta, with music updated by Joanna MacGregor. Meanwhile at London's Polka Theatre for Children, the story of Oona, an Irish Cinderella, also promises new twists on another familiar theme. *The Starlight Cloak* is set to Irish music with dance. Prince Charming is now the young Prince of Ulster. *Pied Piper, Unicorn Arts Theatre, London WC2 (0171-836 3334) to 21 Jan; Starlight Cloak, Polka Theatre, London SW19 (0181-543 4888) to 3 Feb*

What's mew, pussy cat?

Crufts is all very well, but there's no getting away from the fact that it's full of dogs. Imagine swapping all those dogs for cats - imagine, indeed, the NEC full of the lazily gorgeous things - and you may well imagine you've gone to heaven. But heaven (as Belinda Carlisle so rightly noted) is a place on earth, with the Supreme Cat Show making its 20th appearance today. More than 250 champions will be competing in various catty categories, and you can pick up reams of information on breeds, learn how to groom a Persian, or bone up on the new standard of points for bi-colour cats. Pedigrees don't hog the limelight entirely: your humble moggy is just as good as the most perfect Abyssinian, and so there are special non-pedigree awards as well. The show is run by The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy, a national body for felines founded in 1910 to protect the interests of all British cats. Listen carefully, and you can hear the sound of two paws clapping. *NEC, Birmingham (0121-780 4133) today 10.30am-5.30pm, £5/£3*

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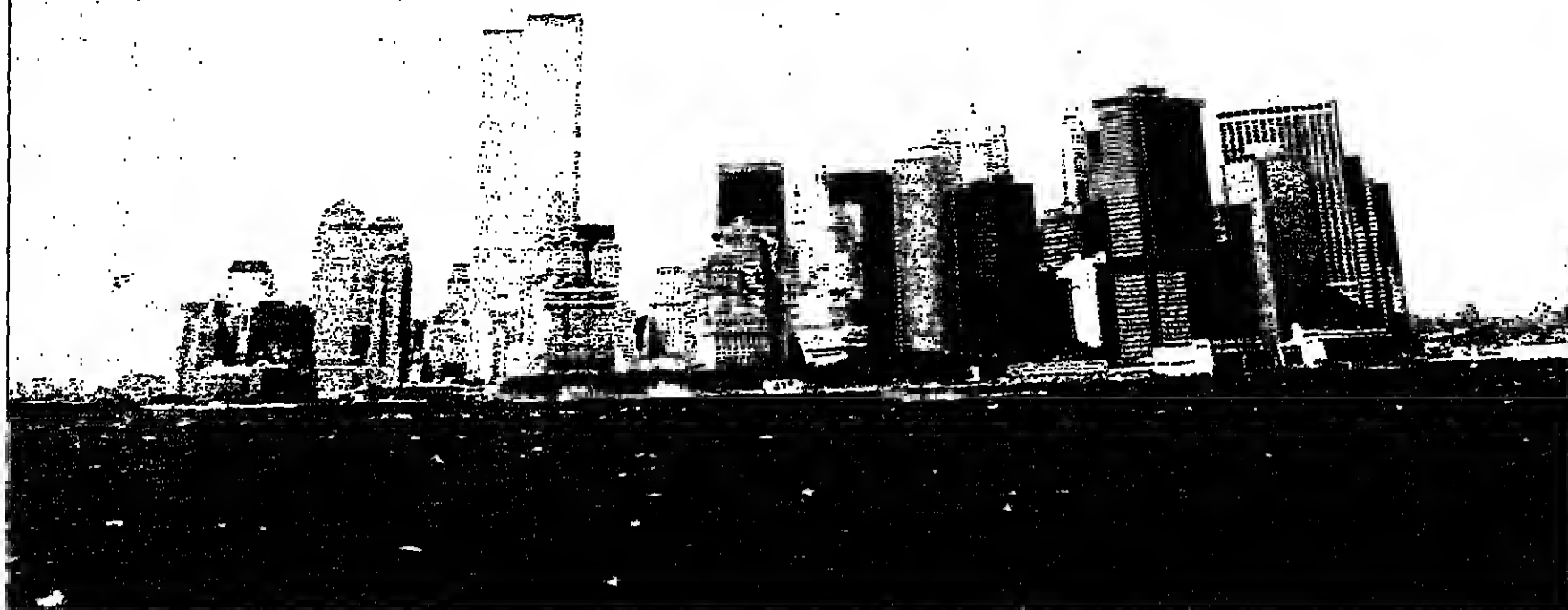
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New York blues

Life on the edge. That's what Reggie Nadelson found when she decided to set her novel on her home town's waterfront



Hard to tell sometimes if it's progress or a return to the shtetl, but New York City is heading back to its waterways. Uptown, Donald Trump fights for a piece of the Hudson for his skyscrapers. Downtown, the marina at the Financial Center is stuffed with more and more yachts – mogul yachts, yuppie yachts, party yachts, even the *Honey Fitz*, JFK's old river cruiser, is for hire complete with the pictures of Jack and Jackie suspended in heart-stopping iconic youth. A few miles away, artists priced out of the Manhattan acronyms (SoHo, TriBeCa), have fled to the Brooklyn waterfront and DUMBO (Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass). Here, where the Brooklyn Navy Yards once launched an invasion fleet for Europe, the arty do battle with the godly: the Jehovah's Witnesses are buying everything they can get their hands on.

The restless city, erected mostly on islands, has nowhere to move so it reclaims riverfront and wetlands, rebuilds rotting docks and piers. Looking ahead through a rear-view mirror, to paraphrase Marshall McLuhan, call it the New York Archipelago.

I never gave this city waterworld much thought until I needed a background for *Red Mercury Blues*, a thriller set in the city – with a cop named Artie Cohen whose passion the city is. Artie Cohen, born in Moscow, came to New York and, like a zillion other immigrants, wanted only to be a New Yorker; it's the air he breathes, the thing he loves. If you grew up in a landlocked city like Moscow, he thinks, five hundred miles from water, the New York archipelago, the coastal city of bridge and rivers, islands and wetlands, has a dazzling glamour. And a kind of terrifying fragility. Driving home one day across the Brooklyn Bridge, I saw something I'd only seen in pho-

tographs and it became the opening of the book. A weird white fog seemed to boil up fast and low from the river and cut Manhattan off. Only the tops of the buildings were visible. Manhattan was an island state. Remote. The buildings, eerie monsters, stuck up out of the rolling white fog while the mist hung on the Empire State Building in sheets.

I became a tourist in my own city and cruised as much of the 578 miles of waterfront as I could. I met bird-watchers at the old Bush Terminal in Brooklyn, where there are 60 species of birds, including rare blue herons. I ran into angry truckers at the Fulton Fish Market where Mayor Giuliani ordered the Mafia out and where, as a result, fish was left rotting and prices soared. Every morning, I rode my bike on the new Hudson River hike path from 14th Street where the HeShes, the transvestite prostitutes, work the piers, to the financial centre where the suits disembark from the Jersey ferries for work. And there are the islands – not just Liberty and Ellis, but City and Riker's and Randall and Rat, and, of course, Manhattan and Staten. Of New York City's five boroughs, only the Bronx is even attached to the American mainland.

In a sense, New York's glamour has always been invested in its geography, ever since 1524 when Giovanni da Verrazano sailed into the spectacular harbour. He was knocked out. The beaches, he thought. The islands, silvery in the setting sun. The natives, gloriously heeded in their New World gear, the feathers and beads and paint. There followed the traders, Henry Hudson in 1609, and the settlers, Dutch, English, Jewish. The rivers were the city's thoroughfares, and by the 19th century, the Hudson was a highway equal to the Thames, crammed with barges and tugs, steamers

and freighters, heading west for Europe or north up the Hudson to the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes. No other city had so marvellous a position for commerce. A couple of recent novels set in the city's 19th century – EL Doctorow's *The Waterworks* and *The Alienist* by Caleb Carr – give a potent sense of what it was like.

With *Red Mercury Blues* brewing, I went looking for the contemporary edges of the city, not just the theme parkery of the South Street Seaport, but the outer boroughs, as Manhattanites think of them. In Queens there are wetlands and nature reserves where birds sometimes get tangled with planes landing at La Guardia and JFK airports. Here, on Hal-low'e'en, a man in a kayak from a local kayaking club got lost all night in the mists on Jamaica Bay. I ate Italian seafood on City Island, connected to the mainland by a causeway, a sleepy village of shipyards and hungarows, that lies in the channel at Throg's Neck where the head of the East River meets Long Island sound. Here, prisoners from Riker's Island who work the city burial detail set out for Hart Island by boat.

Potter's Field is on Hart Island, and 800,000 of the city's unclaimed dead are buried there. Burials take place four days a week; Mondays are for disinterments. It was, I realised, a place of perfect melancholy for my thriller, a place where a dead man who might provoke the wrong questions could be hurried fast, anonymously. I could send Artie Cohen to Hart's Island to find out why.

When Artie feels lousy, he rides the Staten Island ferry. He wanders the marinas, or sits on the roof of his building on the fringe of Chinatown – where he can see the East River. He walks the promenade in Brooklyn Heights, where, at dusk, the magic hour, a hundred cameras snap the skyline from the best fish-eye

view of the city. But much of the action in the book – and several murders – takes place on a different kind of city waterfront: in Brooklyn, on Brighton Beach, where the Russian mob operates at the edge of the Atlantic Ocean.

Ten miles from Wall Street, it resembles a slice of Russia lifted, intact, and moved west. Built in the 1870s by a post Civil War developer, it was modelled on Brighton, England, and intended as a smart resort. The famous baths lasted for almost a century and, until the Second World War, Brighton Beach retained a faded summer style. After that, most of its residents were poor. Yiddish-speaking Jewish immigrants. Then, in the 1970s, Russians, most of them Jewish, too, began pouring in, the result of *déente*. Many were also criminals: the Soviets let out of jail, a kind of Russian Mariel boat lift.

This is a time warp: provincial Russia meets turn-of-the-century Brooklyn at the end of the line, the first step up the ladder; the last coming down for Russian immigrants. The poor live in shoddy houses of raw brick. Along the ocean front, the rich and crooked live in old Art Deco apartment buildings. When the wind blows, you can smell the ocean, the salt, sometimes the garbage. Everything is Russian: the old men on the boardwalk play chess, or wander the winter boardwalk, ice in their beards; the snarling *pishki* seller on the main drag shouts at you when you take his picture. In the windows of Fish Town, smoked salmon, sturgeon, chub, trout are crammed together alongside black bread the shape and weight of small warheads.

A hood in leathers pulls up to Fish Town in a white Jag and buys a kilo of caviar with a bundle of cash. Everything is cash in Brighton Beach, the main financial instrument is the safety

deposit box and the Anchor Bank welcomes its customers in Russian. The elevated train runs over Brighton Beach Avenue, so even in broad daylight the light is filtered mysteriously over the crowds who amble and shop. The snatches of conversation, Russian, Yiddish, are always about money.

Just west, just down the boardwalk from Brighton Beach, is Coney Island. The legendary amusement park, crumbling now – the freak shows deserted, the ferris wheels rusting – might have been lifted straight from Graham Greenland. It gave me a terrific setting for murder. Just east is Sheepshead Bay, with its canals offering half-days fluke fishing on tidy boats, and tidy suburban villas where I could set an entire, up-market Russian mafia family. It was easy to invent mobsters and dead bodies in Brighton Beach; I had to invent them because no one here talks to outsiders.

On New Year's Eve, at the Cafe Arbat they shoot each other up. Writing *Red Mercury Blues*, I got to know my own city. I got to understand that in a town of immigrants, you watch a string in Brooklyn, someone dies in Moscow. Artie Cohen made me think about the millions of immigrants, but especially those who came by sea, like my own grandparents, who disembarked at Ellis Island in 1901 in the middle of the biggest migration in human history. Jan Morris writes about arriving in Hong Kong as theatre. It seems to me that this is even more true of New York: when the immigrants came, as they sailed through the Narrows, past the statue of Liberty, it was as if New York Harbor was America's box office and the curtain just going up on a new life.

'Red Mercury Blues' by Reggie Nadelson, is published on 20 November by Faber & Faber £14.99.

NEW YORK: THE FACTS

Red tape

British passport holders travelling on normal return air tickets to the United States do not require visas. A visa is useful, however, if you visit America frequently. A visitor's visa, valid for up to 10 years, costs £13.75 from the Visa Section of the US Embassy (call 0891 200290 for further details; this is a premium-rate number). Once in New York, you can sign up for the Inspass scheme, which uses a computer record of your hand geometry to give immediate clearance through immigration on subsequent visits; just register at the airport before your flight home.

Getting there

London-New York is the most competitive intercontinental air route in the world. The lowest prices are available through discount agents such as those advertising in these pages, on flights with El Al, Icelandair, Kuwait Airways and Air India – expect to pay around £200, including taxes of around £25. Prices increase steeply in mid-December, and will fall again in early January.

Airport links

The cheapest and surest way from Kennedy into Manhattan is to take the free Port Authority bus to Howard Beach subway station. From here, a \$1.25 (80p) ride will take you to any station on the New York subway system. Total journey time from Kennedy airport to midtown Manhattan is about 75 minutes. From Newark airport in New Jersey, the most exotic alternative to the New Jersey Transit bus to Manhattan, price \$7 (£4.50), is to take a taxi to Hoboken for around \$25 (£16) and cross on the ferry.

Getting around

The subway system is fast, cheap and complicated. Before attempting to use it, pick up a map and some flat-rate tokens (\$1.50/95p) from a kiosk in a subway station.

Accommodation

New York is easily the most expensive place to stay in the US. A double room in a good, central hotel such as the Mayflower on Central Park West (265 0060) will cost at least \$150 (£95) per night, even if you secure a cut-price weekend rate. An increasingly popular alternative is a hostel. These are often restricted

to foreign visitors in an apparent bid to deter local lowlife. Single and double rooms are available at the Vanderbilt YMCA (224 East 47th Street, 756 9600) for \$45/\$55 respectively, including tax, while along at the Manhattan Hostel (119 W 45th Street, 302 2603) a double room costs a flat \$50.

A good way to cut accommodation costs is to buy an inclusive package. All the big airlines run packages to New York through their tour operating subsidiaries – American Holidays (0181-577 9966), British Airways Holidays (01293 615353), United Vacations (0181-313 0999), Virgin Holidays (01293 617181).

World Offers.

Flight prices from:

Amsterdam	£88
Athens	£114
Barcelona	£94
Belfast	£55
Berlin	£84
Bilbao	£149
Bologna	£97
Boston	£149
Bremen	£74
Brussels	£59
Bucharest	£222
Cologne	£74
Düsseldorf	£69
Edinburgh	£68
Faro	£114
Frankfurt	£74
Genoa	£157
Glasgow	£68
Hamburg	£74
Hanover	£84
Helsinki	£187
Leipzig	£99
Los Angeles	£314
Lyon	£151
Madrid	£94
Malaga	£154
Marseille	£151
Munich	£84
Nairobi	£434
New York	£149
Oslo	£114
Paris	£54
Pisa	£118
Prague	£145
Rome	£152
Sofia	£237
St Petersburg	£294
Stuttgart	£94
Tel Aviv	£174
Toulouse	£94
Venice	£118
Warsaw	£166
Zurich	£94

All fares listed are return from London, subject to availability and differing travel periods and must be booked by 6th December 1995.

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A journey through time and tide on the Romney Marsh

By Jon Winter



A rich habitat for wildlife, Romney Marsh attracts herons and marsh frogs

Anywhere else it would have looked bizarre: two grown men, knee-deep in flotsam and jetsam, sculpting a man and his boat from plastic bottles, driftwood and marine junk. But this was Romney Marsh on the coastal border of Kent and Sussex. Over the last millennium what was a shallow bay has become a triangular-shaped level stretching out into the English Channel and littered with a wealth of tidal debris and local history.

In the Sussex corner of this triangle, high and dry along the old Saxon shoreline, sits the ancient Cinque Port of Rye. The town is picture-postcard pretty, cluttered with curiosity shops and tea rooms. And it makes an excellent start for a bicycle trip to the Marsh.

From Rye, I headed seaward, cycling along a grassy dyke that follows the last few miles of the River Rother, my destination Dungeness some 10 miles away. Low tide had left the riverbank lined with the resting hulks of trawlers wedged in the silt, some at their final mooring, left lying like decaying carcasses. It was in this watery graveyard that I saw the two sculptors.

I ground to a halt in soft dunes

where the path opened up into miles of perfect sand. This was Camber Sands, crowded on hot summer days, but now delightfully empty. I shared the place with only a cantering horse and a handful of fresh-air junkies. My bike could go no further so I backtracked and joined the road heading to Camber, Lydd and Dungeness.

A gentle cycling speed is just the right pace to travel along these lanes. Walking would be too slow, and in a car you would miss the stalking herons, wild orchids and marsh frogs that thrive along the hedgerows and ditches of Romney Marsh. I passed unnoticed through the hucklet-and-spade village of Camber. Groups of bored youths drifted past the holiday chalets, bungalows and caravan parks.

Following the sea wall out of Camber through Broomhill Sands, the beaches turn to shingle and the sea gets deeper. The road cuts inland here, skirting the perimeter fence of an MOD firing range across some of the bleakest parts of the marsh. Your eyes wander inland over farmland and shingle pits, alive with rabbits and wildfowl.

The road eventually winds its way through Lydd, once an island

How to get there

South East Trains runs services from Charing Cross in London via Ashford to Rye, costing £14.40 for an adult day return. Bikes are carried free.

Where to go

RSPB Dungeness Bird Reserve: open daily except Tuesday, 9am-sunset; Visitor Centre 10am-5pm. Entry charge for non RSPB members: adults £2, children 50p, concessions £1.50.

Dungeness nuclear power station visitors centre: daily except Sat 10am-4pm. Free tours at 10am, 11.30am, 1pm and 2.45pm. Lydd Museum is open on summer bank holidays and during summer school holidays 2.30-5pm (no charge).

Dungeness's old lighthouse is open to visitors between Easter and Oct.

Who to ask

Rye Tourist Information Centre 01797 226 696 or Ashford Tourist Information Centre 01233 629165.

up on the surrounding beaches. A tiny museum here (open during the summer school holidays and on summer Bank Holidays) is apparently crammed with all sorts of wooders from the sea: clay pipes, early bottles, even several tatty pairs of backstays.

"I remember a huge hand of bananas hanging in my grandfather's house, he'd found those on the beach," a local lady told me. "News went round pretty quick. If there was a shipwreck everyone would head off down to the beach to see what there was."

Leaving Lydd, the Marsh becomes a vast shingle beach, its emptiness punctuated by the Meco-cano of shingle extraction and rows of cracking power lines surging out from Dungeness power station. I turned down a shingly path following a signpost for Dungeness Nature Reserve. Deep water-filled pits, abandoned by shingle extractors, have provided perfect habitats for some of Britain's rarer seabirds, and hides are dotted along the reserve's two-and-a-half-mile trail. Depending on the time of year, you might see sandwich terns, gadwalls, pochards and oyster catchers. I cycled on to Dungeness itself,

past the Pilot Inn, up the beach road and past fishermen's cottages to a favourite spot near the power station where little claspboard cottages and converted railway carriages sit on open shingle.

Only one cottage has a garden, an almost occult arrangement of maritime plants and washed-up things. Yellow horned poppy and sea pea grow among twisted, rusting metal, driftwood obelisks, stone circles and marine junk. The garden was created by the late artist and film-maker Derek Jarman and it attracts a regular stream of visitors to this remote corner of Kent.

My journey ended at the top of the old lighthouse, 400 yards inland from the sea one, and the fourth in a succession of beacons left obsolete by tides that continue to pile seven feet of shingle and tidal debris on the tip of this triangle every year. When open to the public, the crow's nest offers a magnificent view back across the marsh to the old Saxon shoreward. Jarman felt the nuclear power station helped give this landscape its charm - an ironic reflection given that the steamy giant poses a silent threat to this extraordinary stretch of our coastline.

SIMON CALDER

The image is uncannily familiar. A model of a DC-10 sporting red and black stripes, plus a brand-name in juvenile script that is still instantly recognised 13 years after a very public financial collapse. Beside the aircraft, the man whose Skytrain concept launched the present era of cut-price transatlantic travel: Sir Freddie Laker is back in business.

Sir Freddie, 73, was star of the show at the World Travel Market in west London this week. Next March, Laker Airways will begin flying from Gatwick to Florida again, operating a series of charter flights to Orlando and Fort Lauderdale. The airline is turning its back on the standby concept that brought in a London-New York ticket of £59 in 1977 - as long as you were prepared to queue for a day or two. The 1996 fare starts at £399 return, and instead of a "oo-frills" service it will be hard to move for inflight twirls.

Laker is borrowing heavily from Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic, with seatback entertainment and inflight gambling. The entrepreneur shrugged off the bankruptcy of his airline in 1982. He told me: "I've been in the industry for 57 years. One loss in the business is better than a lot of many other people."

The annual travel trade fair was the highest ever, but real travellers were excluded as usual. The bravest oecumenist to the business was Nicaragua, which chose the fair to launch a global campaign to attract visitors to Central America's largest attraction. A combination of the

Contra war in the 1980s and seismic activity destroyed the tourism industry. But Lucy Valente of the Nicaraguan Ministry of Tourism was optimistic: "The army has been reduced from 80,000 to 12,000 and there is no more war. We're trying to tempt people to the Atlantic coast."

Israel's tourism ministry had a large presence at the event, trying to minimise concerns about visitor safety following the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin two weeks ago. Despite the sporadic violence in Israel this year, the country is expecting a "peace dividend" to produce 2.5 million visitors in 1995, a record number.

The British Tourist Authority used the fair to launch its plans for Euro '96, the European soccer championships that begin in Liverpool next June. After decades of exporting soccer hooliganism, England will next year be welcoming supporters from 15 European nations, and intends to milk them for their tourism potential.

"We want to expose them to all the tourism attractions in and around the cities where the matches are taking place," said Adele Biss, chairwoman of the BTA and the English Tourist Board. The BTA is organising a series of "Welcome Host" courses to improve the reception given to foreign visitors by everyone from taxi drivers to hotel staff. As well as language tuition, cultural advice is being dispensed - such as on the sensitivity of Japanese guests to being placed in room number four.

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Nothing moves faster than an old lady cycling to church

Water, water everywhere has a dampening effect on the pace of life in Delft: cars come a poor third to pedestrians, bikes and the joys of pottering. By James Rampton

So, it's flat – which part of the Low Countries isn't? – but provincial Holland has far more to offer than the odd dyke and windmill. It is sadly underrated as a holiday destination for Britons. Take Delft – the classic example of a small Dutch market-town.

The first thing you notice as you come in from the Hook of Holland (only half an hour's drive away) is that there is water, water everywhere – hardly surprising when you recall that much of the country actually lies below sea-level. A famous saying goes that God made the Dutch, but the Dutch made Holland. (Or as Thomas Hood put it in *Up the Rhine*: "Holland... lies so low, they're only saved by being dammed.") This was rubbed in to the Dutch all too uncomfortably earlier this year when flooding caused thousands of people to be evacuated from their low-lying homes. It is a source of great national pride that not a single person perished in the crisis.

The effect of all that water on Delft is to calm things down. Thanks to a fiendish system of ooe-way streets and hump-backed bridges in the old town centre, cars have to play third fiddle behind pedestrians and bicycles. Nothing moves faster than an old lady cycling to church (they're not an exclusively British phenomenon), and road rage is confined to irate men in bicycle-clips stuck behind a jam of prams.

The canals have also prevented large-scale development in the centre: there just isn't the space for a high-rise complex. This means that the old town has been left largely undisturbed since 1536, when two-thirds of the wooden buildings were destroyed by a fire caused by lightning. If the vista doesn't match Vermeer's famous *Few of Delft* (which hangs not in Delft but in the Maritshuis in the Hague and which it is curiously difficult to find a postcard of in Delft), that's not the fault of developers. The artist himself admitted to taking a large slice of artistic licence in his painting, shifting buildings around on his canvases.

The townscape is dominated by the twin peaks of the Oude Kerk (old church) on the main



How to get there

Rail: you can reach Delft from Waterloo International in around six hours with a change of train at Brussels Midi and Rotterdam. The lowest fare is £105 return, if you book 14 days in advance. Call the Rail Shop on 0345 300003 for more details.

Air: there are plenty of flights from all over the UK to Amsterdam airport; from here you can reach Delft in 40 minutes by train. The return fare from Gatwick or Heathrow on British Airways (0345 222111) is £87 including tax. Air UK (0345 666777) from Manchester costs £111 return. British Midland (0345 554554) flies from East Midlands for £107.

Who to ask

Holland information line: 0891 200277.

canal, the Oude Delft, and the Nieuwe Kerk (er, new church), situated opposite the ornate town hall in the charming market square. As with New College, Oxford, the terms are relative. The Oude Kerk was founded in 1240, while the Johnny-comelately Nieuwe Kerk dates back to 1383. The old(er) building boasts the memorial to local boy made good, Johannes Vermeer – a touchingly simple flagstone on the floor. But the new(er) edifice provides more historical interest – if only to show that Orange bigotry is not something dreamt up by extreme Ulster Unionists. The monument to Prince William of Orange depicts the pious royal in a sitting position, as kneeling was considered an excessively Catholic thing to do.

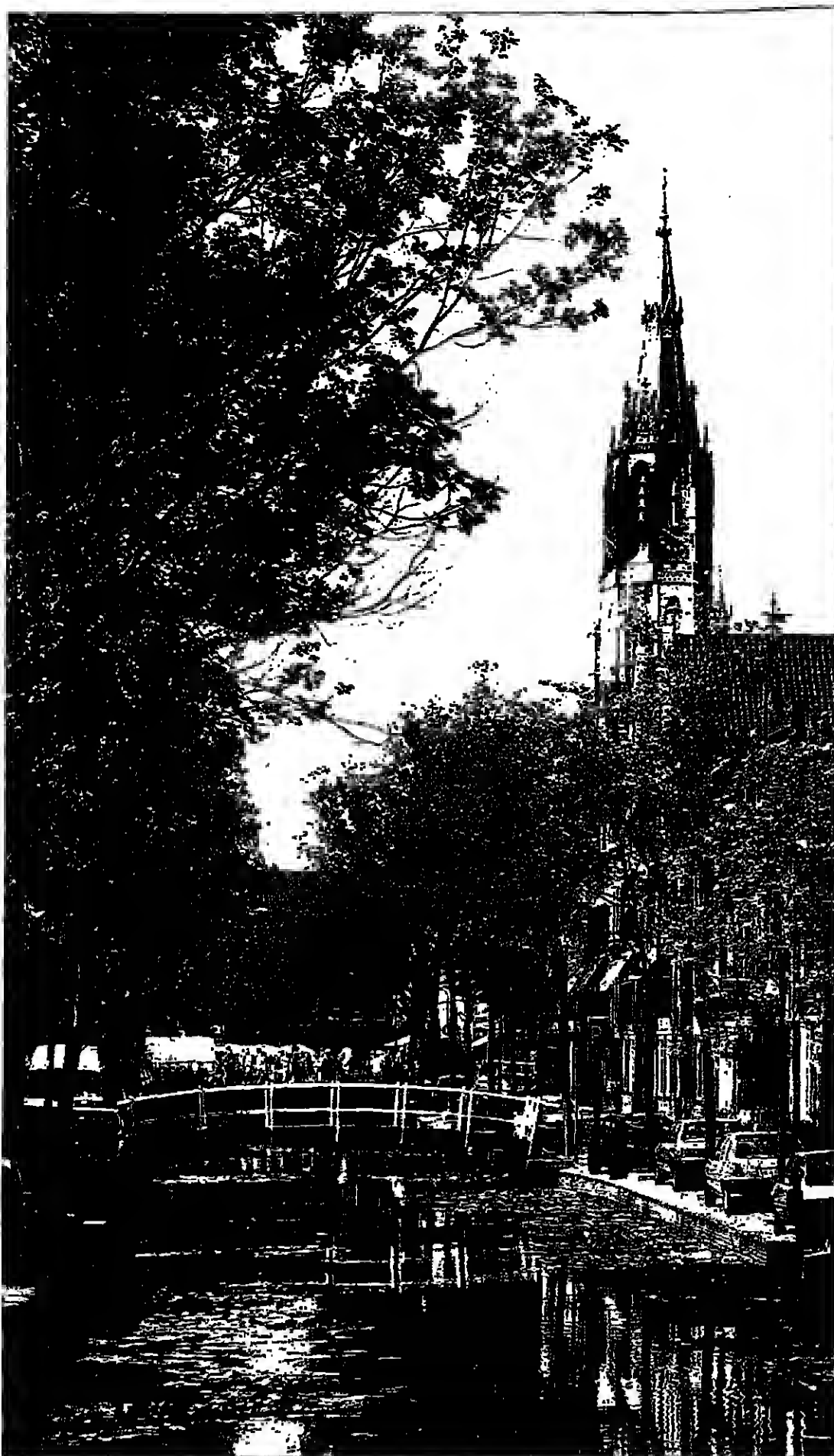
Five minutes away is the attractive late Gothic Prinsenhof

building, now a museum. In here you can gaze at the bullet-holes in the wall where said Prince William was assassinated in 1584. In the herb garden outside, you can catch your breath on a seat which appears to double as the world's largest piece of Delft pottery.

Yet the relaxing thing about Delft is that you don't have to "do" any sights – although there are several Delftware factories and shops for the pottery-minded. As in Amsterdam, the principal pleasure derives from pottering, often aimlessly, around the network of canals that constitute the town centre – on foot or on a pedalo. We spent two and a half weeks doing just that, without once nearing the boredom threshold. You may happen upon a wonderfully-stocked flower market, a wandering jazz band (Delft has an impressive jazz festival in August) or, if you're more unlucky, a stall selling pickled herring (someone should have a quiet word and let the Dutch in on the secret that they're much nicer smoked).

Like most places, the town looks at its best in the soft evening light when you can have a drink on one of the moored barges or visit a restaurant on the market square and wolf down a ludicrously fattening pancake – syrup and whipped cream is a particular favourite (well, you are on holiday). Those planning rugby tours will be disappointed to hear that after intensive research, I found that Delft's red light district amounted to one rather tatty "adult" emporium – the sort of place which specialises in mags and mags.

One word of warning. Don't expect to be able to immerse yourself totally in a foreign culture. Sure, you see old people clomping along in clogs, but the same day's British newspapers offer a tempting reminder of home outside virtually every other shop, and for those who can't go without their daily fix of *Neighbours*, 90 per cent of Dutch homes have access to BBC television. You can't go into a shop without being quizzed – in perfect English – about Arsenal's Dutch striker, Denis Bergkamp. If you don't want anyone to talk to you, the best thing is to pretend to be German.



The principal pleasure of Delft derives from wandering along the canals

Photograph: James Rampton

Six of the best day trips from Delft

De Grote Plas. A large lake on the outskirts of Delft which provides pleasant swimming. Unless you've been working out and toning your stomach to resemble a washboard, be wary of the area marked "naaktstrand". It's the nudist beach.

The Hague. Just 10 minutes by train from Delft. It offers the splendid lakeside Maritshuis, which houses a refreshingly digestible art collection. The star attractions here are Vermeer's exquisite *View of Delft* and a magnificent, late self-portrait by Rembrandt.

Leiden. An elegant historical town centre – 20 minutes by train from Delft – it is criss-crossed with canals and features a fine, ruined castle perched on a hill from which you get a panoramic view.

Utrecht. An hour's train ride from Delft – a small, more manageable version of Amsterdam, without the red light sizzle. The best views of this ancient university town can be had from the imposing cathedral tower.

The Open Air Museum of the Netherlands is just outside Arnhem, 35 minutes beyond Utrecht. This fascinating outdoor museum displays Dutch buildings through the ages.

The Hoge Veluwe. A little further out of Arnhem, you reach this wonderful national park which doubles as a first-rate art gallery (don't miss the Van Gogh's or the sculpture park) and a marvellous heath around which you can cycle on white bicycles provided by the park.



something to declare

True or false?

"My friend, this shop belongs to the Maharaja himself."
– Shopkeeper in Jaipur

False. To quote a notice at the city palace in Jaipur: "Let it be known to everyone that there is NO repeat NO shop owned by Brig. Maharaja Sawai Bhawani Singh of Jaipur. MVC: Maharani Padmani Devi of Jaipur; or Princess Diya Kumari of Jaipur; within the city palace, Jaigarh, Amber or elsewhere to the city of Jaipur. Anyone claiming this is misleading the public, is a fraud, and will be prosecuted. By order."

Bargains of the week

Bus fares to Poland are excellent value due to extensive competition. Return fares from various points in the UK to cities such as Poznan, Lodz, Wroclaw, Warsaw. Krakow and Gdansk cost around £85 through companies such as Eurolines (0990 808080), Eurolap (0171-828 9008) and Fregata (0171-734 5101). The airpass from Canadian Airlines (0345 616767) offers a cut-price way to go skiing and sunbathing this winter. Starting in Toronto, you could fly to Vancouver, onwards to Orlando in Florida and back to Toronto for £216 – a fraction of the normal fare.

Visitors' book

Baikal Museum, Lake Baikal, Siberia

There are not enough superlatives for Baikal and Siberia
– Tom Heffernan (no address given)

A wonder of the world! Fabulous!
– Jodi Abbott, Oregon

Preserve Baikal. Thank you for your work
– Janet Carpenter, Maine

Vive le lac Baikal
– Pierre-Jean, France

So refreshing to swim in the lake. Try it after a few vodkas.
– Mike and David Stout, Lancashire

Hopefully I'll be back to scuba-dive one day
– J. Reuser, Namibia

Much more needs to be done to protect Baikal's unique biodiversity through research, education and prevention of pollution
– Joseph Sing, Florida

How about some English (French? German?) translations
– Sarah Jackson, England

Cutie seals – illegible signature, en route from Hong Kong to London

Trouble spots

This week's advice from our man in the Foreign Office

Kuwait

"Care should be taken when using beaches and picnic spots. Even when officially cleared, there is still a danger from unexploded ordnance."

Egypt

Avoid travelling "to or through the governorates of Minya or Assuit (which includes the tourist sites of Tel el Azarna and Beni Hassan) unless you have essential business there."

Zambia

"There has been looting and sporadic rioting in Livingstone, Zambia's border town with Zimbabwe at the Victoria Falls. We recommend that British nationals should not visit Livingstone at present."

Information supplied by the Foreign Office Travel Advice Unit. To contact them, dial 0171-270 4129, check page 564 on BBC2 CeeFax or access the Internet, <http://www.fco.gov.uk/>

EUROPEAN DEPARTURES

Lübeck in Germany is off most tourists' agendas, but this ancient settlement is one of the most attractive cities in northern Europe. Scandioavian Seaways (01255 241234) offers short-break holidays from Harwich. The price of £172 per person includes two nights aboard ship to and from Hamburg, the rail connection and two nights' B&B at a hotel in Lübeck.

Two-for-the-price-of-one tickets are all the rage within Europe at the moment. Air UK (0345 666777) has teamed up with Kellogg's to provide cheap flights for consumers of Corn Flakes. Media Travel of Surrey (01784 434434) is offering fares on Alitalia to

Italy starting at £99 plus tax when two people travel together. Air Portugal (0171-828 0262) is offering three days' free car rental to couples who fly to any of its home bases – Faro, Lisbon or Oporto. The cost per person is £114, exclusive of taxes, service charges, week-end supplements and personal accident insurance.

The first exhibition devoted exclusively to the work of Johannes Vermeer is on display in Washington, but it will move to the Hague from 1 March to 2 June. Because demand for the artist's exhibition is likely to be high, the Netherlands Board of Tourism is selling tickets in advance. Write to PO Box 523, London SW1E 6NT

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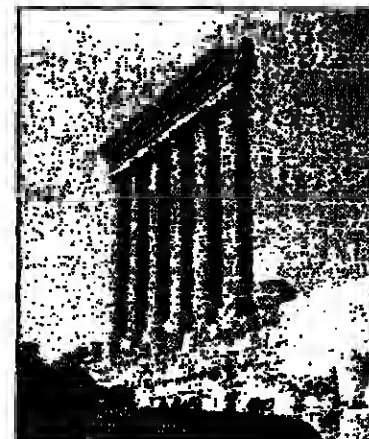
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Our newly inaugurated flight from London Gatwick to Damascus enables us to offer a comprehensive visit to two of the most important countries of antiquity in the Middle East, which have been little-visited in the recent past. The Syrian section of the itinerary takes in the familiar sites of Damascus, Crac des Chevaliers and Palmyra whilst in Lebanon we visit both the ancient sites of Baalbeck and Palmyra together with a restful two-night stay at Anfe on Lebanon's Corniche. This is without doubt a wonderful opportunity to visit some of the world's most interesting sites. We reach Damascus in the evening and spend the first night in the oldest living city in the world and the Islamic capital under the Omayyads. Exploration of the city has to be on foot, navigating the tortuous alleys of the old city is wonderful. Palmyra is a very special place – the city has colonnaded streets and monumental arches but is perhaps most well known for the Temple of Baal. The Lebanese are proudly aware that they stand at a historic crossroads. Behind them lie two decades of violence that claimed thousands of lives and brought the country's economy, its shattered capital, suburbs and towns, and even its people, to the edge of anarchy. In front of them is the Lebanon's prized reputation as the Middle East's marketplace and the quintessential travel destination.

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The early settlers built timid cottages on the marshy banks of the Angara river. Their homes have been gently subsiding ever since. Sturdy shutters to block out

range of the Lupulev in which I was flying was 4,000 kilometres; the distance to Irkutsk is 5,000km. Most other visitors arrive by rail, and use Irkutsk as a kind of railway service station: a place to replenish your



When it is warm enough to swim, say the locals, the water is so transparent that you can see 40 yards down. The lake contains one-sixth of the world's fresh water, and a huge number of species are unique to Siberia's natural reservoir: freshwater seals, for example. Log cabins along the shore are

hopetully named "Koktail Bar". In the restaurant (bafflingly located in the sub-basement), order some *omul* — the local freshwater salmon that is, you guessed it, unique to Baikal — and vodka. Pull back the fusty lake curtain, and the whole wide window is filled with a glorious vision of the lake at the end of the world. Great black crows strut around, intent on scavenging what they can from the unforbearing earth before it is covered in a freeze-over for the real winter — a score of degrees away, but approaching fast.



A giant toilet is the latest Atourist attraction in the Japanese city of Osaka. This large-scale working model is one of the exhibits at the Sewerage Science Museum, opened this year to mark the centenary of modern sanitation in the city. You can crawl through a section of sewer tunnel, fortunately one isolated from the mains. Contact the Japan National Tourist Office in London (0171-734 9638) or the Osaka Tourist Information Service on (06) 941 9200.

If the Swiss had any soul, they would mark the Millennium by demolishing St Moritz Bad. They could raze Dorf, too

For me, they could raise the roof while they are at it. The place where wintersports holidays supposedly started is now a swanky but grey little Swiss town sited at an unattractively high altitude, and its three famous five-star hotels struck me as parodies of conspicuous consumption. Even if I won the lottery and the view from their windows were improved in the radical way I've suggested, I'd prefer to stay down at the bottom of the famous Cresta toboggan run, in still-villagey Celerina – perhaps in the family-run hotel Astoria.



IND

An exceptional V

out at Lagalb, where a cable-car serves an isolated mogulled mountain of 850m vertical – though there are a couple of short legitimate blacks on Corviglia. A great way to end a day on Corvatsch, across the valley, is the 6km (4 miles) Piz Fimmetsee run – a shaded path, but practically all of red difficulty.

Good skiers can find jobs to do off-piste, whether it's taking minor variations on piste routes, tackling proper (and tough) off-piste descents from Piz Nair (at the top of Corviglia) or Corvatsch, or embarking on serious expeditions well outside the lift networks – such as down the Roseg valley from Corvatsch.

beneath the glaciers of Piz Bernina to Pontresina. And in a posuer's resort like this, the off-piste snow doesn't get skied out as it does in mainstream resorts.

The skiing will certainly take me back to Oberengadin. For those with interests outside skiing – lunch, apres-ski, tobogganing, shopping (in midwinter) countless activities on the frozen lake, from golf to horse racing – St Moritz has few serious rivals.

It is one of the very best Alpine areas for those country skiing. And there are plenty of marvellous views that happily do not include St Moritz Blot. And who knows, after the millennium.

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The warm heart of Africa

Tim Neale packed up four panniers, mounted his Dawes Synthesis, and returned to Malawi after a gap of 30 years



Refreshment for the tired biker: tomatoes for sale in a Malawian village

Photo: Robert Harding

It's not yet 6am. We're cruising south down the M1, relaxed and chatting side by side. Suddenly we are overtaken by a young man thrashing past on a bicycle pulling a carrier containing the carcass of a pig wrapped in banana leaves. It's a clear challenge: my 24-year Dawes Synthesis (nicknamed Dervia) weighed down with four panniers and my three-score years versus his pride, youth, pig and rattletap bike. We're both grinning and puffing in a dead heat at the Karonga roundabout.

Malawi's slogan is "The Warm Heart of Africa". It can certainly be hot; the gismo on the handlebars reads 110°F at noon this mid-October day as we steam along the Lakeshore Highway. The people here are renowned for their friendliness, which is the main justification for the Tourist Board's claim. The edge is slightly taken off it for us by the constant shriek of "Azungu!" (white people) from sharp-eyed kids racing to the roadside to witness the passing of two crazy foreigners on exotic bikes.

It's not the innocent racism of the

"Azungu!" that grates; it's the "Give me money" that invariably follows. But for every one of these cries, there is a smiling, enterprising barefoot child refusing us with bananas, samosas, tomatoes, mangoes, doughnuts, peanuts.

Thirty years ago, I juddered up and down the corrugated dirt roads of this lovely country in a Land Rover, but probably had much less contact with ordinary Malawians. Cycling, even in such heat, has one huge thirst-induced advantage. At every village we eagerly look out for the women at the borehole pump, or a Coke crate by the door of a shop, or – best of all – a tea room with the kettle steaming on a small charcoal fire to one side. Mud walls, thatched roof, small window apertures, these are dark, blissfully cool places. Inside, several friendly villagers make room for us on the wobbly benches.

The smiling, welcoming owner fills our cups from her huge enamel teapot, pouring boiling water from a height through a jumbo plastic strainer full of tea leaves. I thought I hated strong, ultra-sweet tea but this is nectar.

Starting from Malawi's northern

border on the Songwe river, we have 500 miles of blue water alongside us to the beautiful peninsula of Cape Maclear in the south. The lake – so wide that most days you can only just discern the Tanzanian mountains the other side 40 miles away – is constantly tempting. Not that it is easy to take a dip; the foreshore is the workplace for countless canoe fishermen. It is also the village laundry, playground, source of fresh water and main drain.

The last time I travelled the length of the lake was aboard the 600-ton motor vessel Ilala. In those days, it was thought that there were fish enough down there to feed the nation. At Nkhata Bay crowds gather to give a weekly welcome to the same, newly painted, Ilala, now steaming through waters that are in danger of being fished to death.

Tourism is coming slowly to Malawi. One benefit of Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda's 30-year rule has been the network of good tarmac roads covering the country. Beach lodges, motels and campsites are springing up along this amazingly traffic-free lakeside road.

Many of these are delightful oases of comfort, tented or thatched chalet accommodation on peaceful, sandy paw-paw- or palm-fringed beaches. The food is generally good and, if the generator is started early enough, the beer is cold, too. All for just a few pounds.

It's not all smooth tarmac yet. At Livingstonia we have a rest day and push the bikes uphill to visit the Mission set up more than a hundred years ago. I regret not studying the map more closely. The sign "Bends for 16 kilometres" should have been a reasonable clue. It is a punishing 3,000ft climb to the top. The mountain is wooded but in the leafless dry season the bare branches provide only thin slivers of feeble shade. Women overtake us carrying on their heads great bundles of firewood which would flatten our tyres.

The climb is worth it to sense the calm of this cool mountain-top seat of learning which has contributed so much talent to Central Africa. Below are the gleaming tin roofs of Livingstonia. The Mission Church, the Stone House, the hospital and the dis-

tered secondary school overlooking Livingstone's Lake, are all set among jacaranda, hibiscus, frangipani, poinsettia, bougainvillea and eucalyptus. Here was another surprise – the new freedom with which the groups of students, since last year's multi-party elections, debate Politics and Life. Remembering my previous time here, this openness is amazing.

It amazes an older generation of Malawians, too. We turn off the lakeshore road on another day to visit a friend I worked with 30 years ago. A small boy demands no money for the privilege of pedalling furiously ahead to show us the way.

My former colleague is now the head man in his village. As we relax in the shade, he expresses his great satisfaction that, in his old age, he is able to entertain even Azungu without the police wanting to know what is being discussed. He and many of my Malawian friends spent time in prison for their views.

And what else has changed? Women still carry huge shiny metal buckets of water on their heads for miles, till the

fields with their babies wrapped to their backs in colourful cocoons, pound the maize, while the men still seem to do most of the talking and drinking. Is education for women taken more seriously nowadays? I wonder. "Ah, yes", my friend sighs "they must be given an equal chance. You see, the world has been turned upside down now and the women are very strong."

His wife brings us tea and later one of their shy teenage grand-daughters collects the tray. Both curtsy deeply and lower their gaze, retiring to rush mats laid out under a large evergreen mango tree a discreet 50 yards away. Here, four generations – women, girls and babies – cook and weave and talk as has forever been the way. The timeless scene is disturbed by a large bird which swoops over a frantic hen to carry off one of her five scattering chicks. "Careless woman!" tuts the old man.

Tim Neale was Head of Programmes, Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, from 1964 to 1967. He is currently cycling from Nairobi to Great Zimbabwe.

Win a Ski holiday to Keystone, Colorado with the INDEPENDENT

Plus K2 skis and snowboards to be won

Today is the final day of our Extreme Ski prize draw. To celebrate the release of Warren Miller's new ski film Endless Winter, we've teamed up with Black Diamond Films to bring you your own taste of extreme skiing. Our exclusive first prize is a seven day holiday for two in the majestic mountains of Colorado, USA. You'll be staying in the top ski resort of Keystone which offers world-class accommodation plus the superb experience of night skiing. Not only that, but with your interchangeable lift ticket you'll be able to take to the slopes of Keystone, Breckenridge and Arapahoe Basin. Spoil for choice you'll be able to ski and snowboard through champagne powder snow glistening beneath deep blue Colorado skies.

For our next six winners, we have a fabulous range of K2 skis and snowboards to choose from. The four ski models available are the FX 11.2 from the Adrenaltn series; MSL10.0 from the Attack series; 5500 CS from the Unlimited series and the 5500 NS from the ladies Unlimited series. If you'd like to try your hand at snowboarding then you could be surfing on K2's Dart Freestyle snowboard or the Eldorado 164 Extreme and Freeriding snowboard.

Twenty-four readers will receive a pair of Vail Regulator Goggles, from Smith, the number one brand in the UK. These goggles feature an advanced anti-fog system, perfect for the serious skier. Fifty readers will receive a Tur-

tle Fur neck warmer great for mountain tops and bus stops! Also available are three hundred copies of Warren Miller's video Born to Ski. Designed to take your breath away, it features extreme skiing at its best. Another seven winners will each receive a case of Labatt's Blue Beer.

How to enter: To enter our prize draw you must collect five differently numbered tokens from the seven we have published this week in the Independent on Sunday and the Independent on Sunday. Today we print our final token, token 7, plus another entry form which you need to complete and send in with your tokens. Rules are as previously published.

For further information on the Extreme Ski Cinema Tour and your nearest venue, call 0171 240 4071. Tickets are available for £4.99 in advance or £5.99 on the door. For information on new low fares packages (from £325) to Keystone and Breckenridge, Colorado simply call 0800 891772.

INDEPENDENT/SKI ENTRY FORM

Send your completed entry form, along with 5 differently numbered tokens, (including one from the Independent on Sunday) to: Independent/Extreme Ski Prize Draw, P.O. Box 88, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL7 1TL. Closing date: 4 December 1995.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____

DAY TIME TELEPHONE NO: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

Labatt's Blue



SMITH

The best off-road bike in the world is no escape from a bull that fancies your red socks

By Catherine Barr

The elderly man opposite nudged his wife. "Did you see that, dear? Four vans just passed the window. One was of them was red." His wife's fixation with her Rice Krispies wavered only slightly. Perhaps she didn't have them at home. Only the local radio station and the crunch of cereal invaded the silence after that – until the landlady burst in with an announcement that the bacon wasn't really bacon.

It was the vegetarian option, which looked a bit odd. She was out of Linda McCartney's sausages. All in Bosnia, according to the news. We were mutually, silently, eternally grateful that we'd had supper in Ennerdale's local pub the night before.

This was day two of our 210-mile coast-to-coast cycle trip from St Bees in Cumbria to Robin Hood's Bay on the east coast. The bikes were about to face their first mountain. This was the bit our guidebook (*The Coast-to-Coast Ride*, Future Books £12.99) described as having 850ft climbs, bike nn back. I felt some comfort in believing that this was the only part where we would have to shoulder the load.

We filled our water bottles with an isotonic drink more often gulped by bronzed athletes. Rasping for breath and balancing bicycles and panniers an hour later, the desire to buy a lighter bike outdid any other feeling.

A few illusions were shattered in those first few days, such as the lure of downhill. What motivates me up a hill is imagining the feeling of coming down. The views, the peace. However, the first part of the descent into Wasdale was unrideable. Bikes and riders were scratched and separated in a crashing descent over a stream of boulders. The other mistake was that



Coast to coast: there are mountains enough between St Bees and Robin Hood's Bay

Photograph: Robert Harding

having made it, we scoffed at the next hill. We laughed about having time for a bath before supper. It was one of those false summits that you least expect. We got lost and crashed down off the moor hours later, shuddering with "rock shock".

After looking over our muddled maps, the couple greeting us at the B&B that night announced that we had a "hard day tomorrow".

Our ride over Watna Scar the next day was a hard one. An explosion of hailstones sent us racing for shelter and then hurrying into the bicycle shop in Ambleside. We spent a fortune on heavy-duty wet-weather gear – and it never rained again on our trip.

Incredibly, our city limbs started easing into the pace and as the mountains rounded into the Yorkshire Dales, we realised we were doing all right, and were nearly half way through the trip. Bright berries of rowan

trees stood out dramatically against the autumn landscape. Cold air filled our frantically expanding lungs, but failed to get through our Gortex gear. We felt good, and all the better, I should admit, for a night at a hotel with a whirlpool bath and a washing service.

Pride to the winds, we were heaving our bicycles before us the next day when we were rounded on by a blur of Lycra. These bikers were doing the trip in just four days, they said. We assured them that we too were "doing" every inch of the way. "You don't need pink Lycra to get you over a mountain, we thought. We passed them later as they had lunch in the back of their support car. Must have forgotten to mention it, I suppose.

One drama in Yorkshire was the bull. The best off-road bike in the world is no escape from a bull that fancies (or might fancy) your red socks. Hauling our bikes and packs over three stone walls to avoid

the issue was, according to my more daring cycling partners, a ridiculous and unnecessary business. I would have carried my bike up a mountain to avoid that animal.

The riding got easier. We got off less and the mountains disappeared. Our carefully weighted packs were crammed with the two rounds of sandwiches, Club biscuit and apple – packed lunches supplied by the B&Bs. After a week in (and out of) the saddle, we overshot the turning for the hilltop view of Robin Hood's Bay that marks the end of the route. But we were head-on for the North Sea at the bottom of our final descent. According to the guidebook, we were supposed to dip our wheels triumphantly in the water. A few wide-eyed tourists braced themselves for what appeared to be a suicide pact. One mile more and it might have been.

Pedalling their wares

This selection of companies offers cycling holidays in Britain and abroad:

Bicycle Beano (01982 560471): Wales
Cotswold Cycling Co (01242 250642): Cotswolds
Country Lanes (014251 655022): Cotswolds and Wiltshire
Pedal for Pleasure (01453 762233): Cotswolds
Anglo-Dutch Sports (0181-289 2808): Holland
Rough Tracks (01249 816665): off-road in France
Susi Madron's Cycling for Softies (0161-248 8282): France
Breton Bikes (00 33 96 24 86 72): Cycle-camping in France



By far the most expensive bills that British chancellors tend to land us with are not changes in taxation, but mistakes in macroeconomic policy

The run-up to the Budget is normally one of the duller periods in the markets. It was as true when the Budget was held in the spring as it is that it is held in the autumn. The City rarely tries to anticipate the details of a Budget.

After all, the Chancellor does hold most of the cards. Apart from Nigel Lawson's decision to abolish tax relief on life insurance premiums 10 years ago, which was accurately forecast by one leading daily newspaper, it is a long time since there has been a seriously accurate pre-Budget leak that would have been profitable to act on in advance.

True, the parameters of some humdrum things, such as the increases in rates of duty on beer, cigarettes and petrol, can usually be safely taken for granted. But those that tend to really hurt, like the imposition of VAT on electricity and gas, are chosen by chancellors precisely because they are effectively difficult to circumvent. There is nothing easier, after all, in a fiscal crisis than to plunk an extra tax on something for which there is no real alternative.

It is only capital taxes that tend to be truly discretionary, since those who have to pay them are usually smart or rich

enough to know how to avoid them. This year there is unlikely to be anything to fear on this score, given the Prime Minister's commitment to trying to phase out both capital gains tax and inheritance tax over time.

Of course, by far the most expensive bills British chancellors tend to land most of us with are not changes in taxation, but mistakes in macroeconomic policy.

Unlike marginal changes in duty on beer or fags, a serious misjudgement on the direction of the economy can have a hugely adverse effect on the level of growth in the economy, or on inflation or interest rates — three key variables that have the capacity to impoverish all of us. In fact, this looks like being one of those years when most investors can approach the Budget in a relatively sanguine frame of mind.

The stock market is strong, inflation is still subdued (as this week's impressive retail price index figures confirmed) and both tax cuts and interest rate cuts now look to be on the way — one sooner maybe, the other later.

The biggest issue about the Budget this year is how far Mr Clarke will feel able, or obliged, to encourage extra spending in the economy in



JONATHAN DAVIS
INVESTMENTS

order to try and win the next election for his party.

How much room for manoeuvre he has is, as always, the subject of fierce debate among the pundits. Estimates range from £2bn to £5bn or more.

The spin doctors, you can be sure, are already hard at work on the messages to convince us that, whatever the actual changes proposed on the day, it justifies us all starting to feel good again.

A useful rule of thumb, favoured by some of the smartest investors, is that the initial press reaction to a Budget is usually wrong. Thus, Mr Lawson's disastrous giveaway Budget before the 1987 election, which stoked up inflation to 10 per cent and exacerbated the succeeding slump, was greeted at the time as one of

the greatest triumphs the post-war period.

Geoffrey Howe's 1981 Budget was famously hailed as one of the worst, yet is widely interpreted as a turning point now.

This year, all we know for certain is that the Budget will be made to sound good to voters. Mr Clarke will make sure of that.

The true bill will only come in later, probably after the next election, and may well be less palatable. Even then, this year's Budget will only be one small piece in a general economic and monetary picture that is increasingly geared towards securing victory for the Conservatives at the next election.

Does this all sound too cynical? Maybe, but history teaches investors to count a chancellor's largesse with one hand while totting up the longer term consequences with the other. In the short term, this looks like being a Budget that will be good for the stock market.

Shares tend to like a moderate pre-election boom. The gilt market may be more wary, but with interest rates set to fall by the end of the year, that too is likely to help valuations in both markets. Investors should sleep easy.

Meanwhile, over the Atlantic, a much more impor-

tant budgetary process looks to be afoot. The showdown between President Bill Clinton and the Republican majority in Congress is grand political theatre. Large chunks of the Federal government machine were closed down this week with some 40 per cent of employees sent home.

The Statue of Liberty was closed to visitors, and the White House, poor souls, had to make do with just one chef on duty, instead of four. Most economic statistics will not appear until the Budget dispute is resolved.

The Treasury has avoided defaulting on its debts for the moment. But only by dint of "slicing plaster" devices, such as suspending payments in two Federal government pension funds — "doing a Robert Maxwell," as Robert Aspinall, the market strategist at broker Panmure Gordon, jokingly dubbed it this week.

How long it can continue to do so is not clear, though the consensus is that these measures could hold the line until Christmas, if the dispute lasts that long.

The markets have convinced themselves that the struggle in America for control of the budget process is unlikely to lead to the US government defaulting on its debt obligations.

It would indeed be an astonishing turn-up for the books if it did. The US government is the linchpin of the world financial system, and the yield on its bonds is one of the key factors affecting interest rates around the world.

The US bond yield would certainly rise if there was even the slightest suspicion that the US might wobble on its obligations. With world interest rates already at historically high level in real, or inflation adjusted terms, the bill for fiscal irresponsibility would then certainly spill over here.

On the other hand, if the result of the current stand-off in Washington is a genuinely workable agreement that goes even part of the way towards reducing the US budget deficit, then that is certainly a prize well worth going for. There is a well-documented correlation between the level of government deficits and interest rates.

Whatever the outcome of the shenanigans in Washington, the chances are that it will end up having a much bigger impact on investors here than anything Mr Clarke comes up with at the end of the month. A lasting solution to the interminable budget crises in the US could actually do more for shares here than the Chancellor possibly could.



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How 460 real ale connoisseurs have put money where their mouths are

By Clifford German

Putting your money where your mouth is has a special significance for 460 dedicated drinkers of real ale. They are members not only of the Campaign for Real Ale but also of the Camra Investment Club, in which they pool their funds and buy shares in small breweries and pub chains that make and sell real ales.

Like the ethical investment trusts that will not buy shares in companies that create pollution and exploit the environment, the Camra Invest-

ment Club is happy to make money for its investors, but there are some things it will not do. The club will never support a takeover bid for a real ale brewer or for a pub chain that supports the sale of real ales.

It also opposed the recent Greenall takeover bid for the Boddington chain on the grounds that Boddington pubs traditionally favour real ales.

The club traces its origin to the Star Investment Club, set up one evening in the bar of

the Star pub in Cheadle, Cheshire, but took a quantum leap in 1989 and is open to all 46,000 members of Camra.

It is still small beer in money terms but its active members contribute a regular amount of anything between £5 and £83 a month, which channels £7,000 a month into the pool.

It has holdings worth around £350,000 invested in shares in about 30 listed companies, including Adnams, Fuller's, Hyde's, Jennings, Joseph Holt, Marston's, Mor-

land, Shepherd Neame, Vaux and Youngs.

The club has small stakes in two of the major brewers. Allied Domecq and Bass, and also in Wetherspoons and Regent Inns, the specialised pub chains that sell rather than brew real ales.

The investment portfolio is currently showing a profit of about 15 per cent above cost, with the small brewery sector enjoying the benefits of a long hot summer, but the investments in Brent Walker,

Ascot Holdings and United Breweries are looking a bit sick.

Investors contribute for as long as they wish, 5 per cent of the investment (up to a maximum of £1 a month) goes to cover administration and bank charges, and there is twice-yearly 0.5 per cent management charge on the fund. The net value of the investments is recalculated every month to fix a single price for the units to be allocated, and for members who wish to sell out.

Dividends are reinvested but the club organises regular visits to the breweries where it has bought shares. The last trip was to the Ann Street Brewery in Jersey on 9 November.

The club is run by Neil Kellett, a partner in the Manchester-based firm of chartered accountants Snow, Kellett, which is a member of IMRO, the regulatory body for investment managers.

Call 0161-236-9696 for more information on the club.

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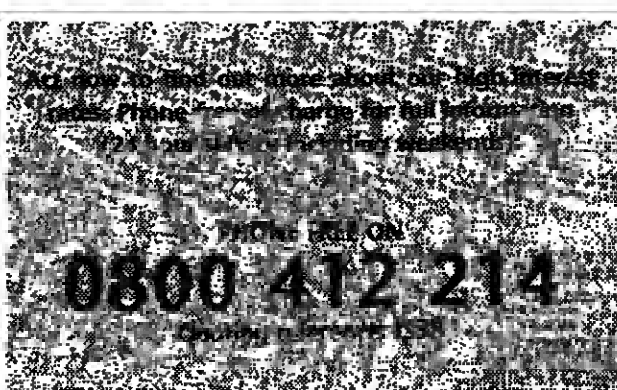
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Act of faith: Investors in a new Dublin-based trust must hope that Russia's economy matches the durability of this Orthodox church

Gambling on Third World debt

By Clifford German

Investors who positively enjoy a calculated gamble are being offered, later this month, a stake in Sovereign Debt Trust, a new Dublin-based investment trust sponsored by brokers Greig Middleton, run by Baring Asset Management and part-financed by ING Bank. The new trust will invest in bonds and loan stocks issued by Third World countries, especially in Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe.

Its sponsors claim that it will be less risky than trusts investing in the shares of companies listed in emerging markets, on the less than wholly reassuring grounds that a financial collapse would certainly knock bond prices, but there would always be some

residual value, while a collapse would also knock share prices and could wipe out many companies altogether. Investors willing to invest for its 10-year life may face some sleepless nights if there are too many re-runs of the crisis that struck the Mexican economy last February and ripped round the emerging economies, but if the process of integrating them into an expanding low-inflation world economy suffers nothing worse than the occasional panic, then the returns could be far greater than in developed economies.

The trust will be able to borrow up to 20 per cent in addition to the capital that investors subscribe, in order to gear up its investment

capacity. More than half the money will always be invested in Brady bonds, the name given to debt stock issued by 15 developing-country governments (mainly in Latin America) to refinance bank loans on which they had defaulted in the Eighties. The bonds were issued as part of a package negotiated with individual debtor countries. Part of their debt was excused in return for accepting tough new rules to promote the private sector of their economies, and agreeing to run their economies responsibly. More than \$140bn (£90bn) worth of bonds are currently traded and the market is very liquid.

So far none has defaulted again, but Brady bonds issued by countries like Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, Poland and Nigeria are only rated B or BB by international credit agencies like Standard & Poor's. In other words they are below investment grade. They fell by as much as 20 per cent early in 1994 after the US signalled an upturn in its interest rates, and fell a further 20 per cent in the first quarter of 1995 after the collapse of the Mexican peso.

Nigeria's Brady bonds fell by 10 per cent last week after the government defied world opinion by executing Ken Saro-Wiwa. But most Brady bonds are denominated in US dollars, carry a good rate of interest linked to the London market rate for dollars, or were issued at a substantial discount, or both, and some are backed by an element of collateral in the form of US Treasury bonds held by the emerging governments.

When their economies prosper, and when US interest rates are falling, the positive impact on Brady bonds is magnified. Over the last five years total returns including capital and income have been running around 100 per cent, compared with a 60 per cent cumulative return on US Treasury bonds. The average rate of return has been around 14 per cent plus a capital gain of 4 to 5 per cent, producing overall returns of up to 18 per cent a year, compared with around 6 per cent on Treasury bonds.

The managers can also put up to 15 per cent of the fund

in other hard-currency bonds, including Eurobonds and US bonds issued by emerging country governments, and up to 5 per cent in bonds that are in default but can still be bought and sold, often at big discounts to their nominal value. Many Russian loans are in default, but they represent excellent value if the Russian economy comes good, according to Michael Mabbutt at BAM, who will be in charge of the fund. A maximum of 15 per cent can also be invested in debt denominated in local currencies, where nominal yields can be enormous, but so can the rate at which the currency depreciates against the dollar.

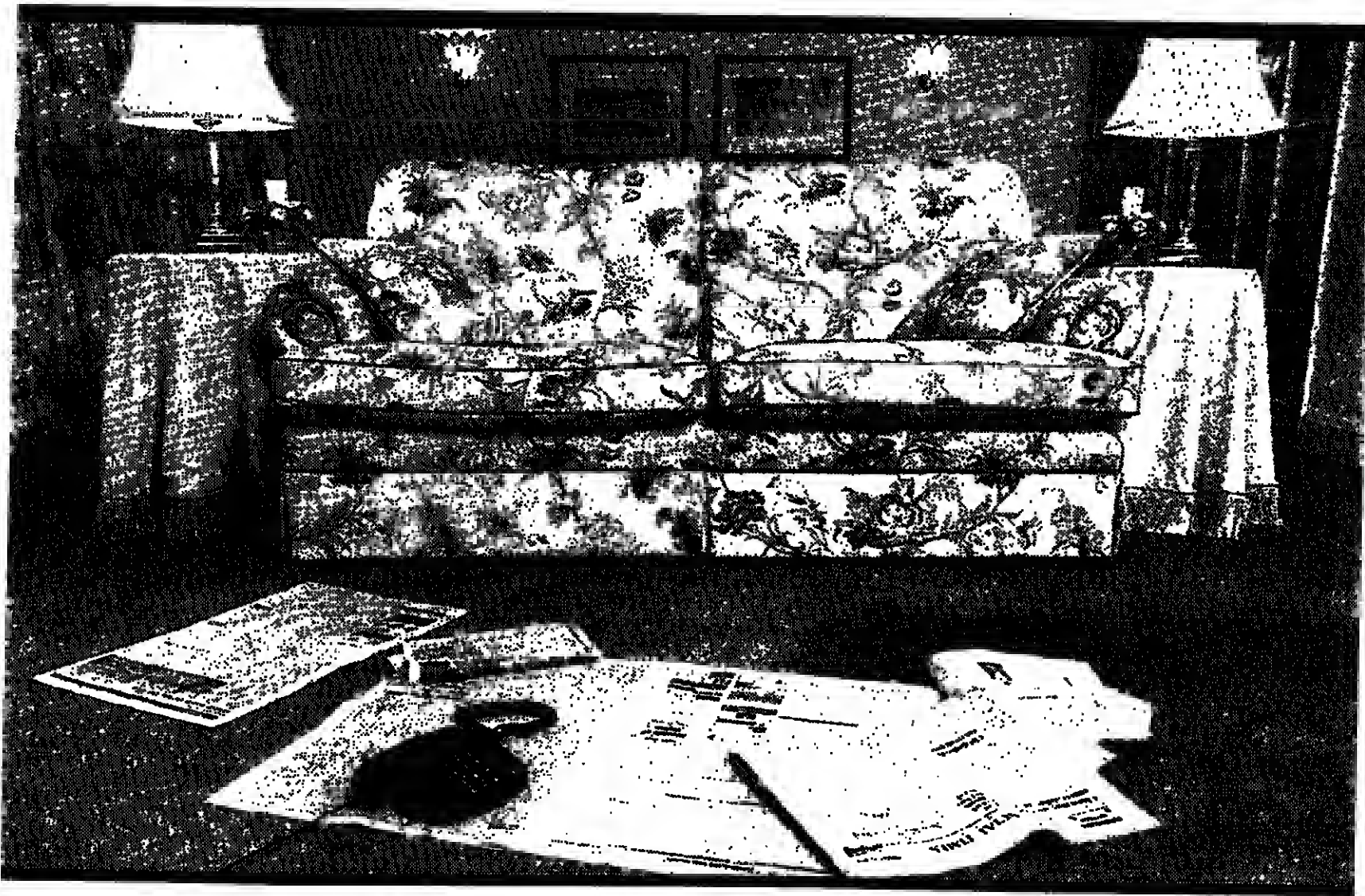
The portfolio will be spread across 15 to 20 countries and 30-odd different stocks, and will be traded quite actively. The initial expenses will depend on the amount raised, but if the target of £50m is reached they should not be more than 3 to 3.5 per cent, including a 1.5 per cent commission for financial advisers who introduce investors. The initial charge to investors will be not more than 3 per cent, and the annual management charge 0.95 per cent.

The trust is expected to appeal to institutions and to high net worth individuals in the US, UK, Europe and the Middle East. Being based in Dublin the trust will pay no corporation tax or gains tax, and it is expected to pay an annual dividend of 11.5 per cent, payable quarterly, and yield 14 per cent a year if held to redemption. If the market is depressed when the trust comes to the end of its planned life in 2005 it will probably be converted into a longer-term asset, according to David Thomas at Greig Middleton.

Shareholders can take dividends in cash, elect for new shares, or have their dividends reinvested in existing shares, a device that would allow the managers to buy up shares overhanging the market and reduce any discount to asset value that might develop. The minimum subscription will be \$10,000 or £6,000, but as a European company the trust qualifies as a single company PEP and investors can put a full £6,000 into a PEP package.

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Alliance & Leicester has extended the 5.5 per cent discount on its standard variable mortgage rate until January 1997, its 2.75 per cent discount until January 1998 and its 2 per cent discount until January 1999. Rates apply to a maximum 75 per cent loan to value. Discounts for higher loans to value are slightly higher. They come with a £200 cashback, free valuation until 16 December and a year's free unemployment insurance for loans completed by 31 December.

Royal Bank of Scotland now offers loans up to 95 per cent of valuation at 5.75 per cent until 11 February next year, 6.45 per cent until 11 February 1998, 7.19 per cent until 1999, 7.95 per cent to 2001 and 8.75 per cent until 13 February 2006, with penalties in the first four, five, five, six and 10 years respectively.

Fixed rates in an offshore Guernsey account

Dirmingham Midshires is offering investors fixed rates of 7.25 per cent gross until end-January 1999, 6.75

per cent to 31 January 1998; 6.5 per cent to 31 January 1997 in its offshore Guernsey account. Interest is taxable for UK residents; minimum investment is £5,000.

Johnson Fry is launching a new Venture Capital Trust investing at least 75 per cent of its assets in shares traded on the Alternative Investment Market. The target yield is 5 per cent tax-free, which grosses to over 20 per cent for investors who can take advantage of all VCT tax reliefs.

Swiss Life is offering three, five and seven-year guaranteed income bonds giving 5.7, 6.2 and 6.5 per cent respectively on amounts between £5,000 and £50,000; extra 0.2 per cent for larger amounts.

CU care plan offers guaranteed benefit

Commercial Union is offering guaranteed lifetime benefit to over-65s who buy its long-term care plan with a single premium. Until now long-term care insurance has had a review clause that entitled the insurer to review premiums and benefits if claims experience warranted it.

Royal Bank of Scotland is offering an interest and charge-free £300 overdraft for the first two months for anyone moving a current account from another bank.

NatWest Bank is offering a free fact sheet, "Pensions for Women", outlining state pension entitlements for women and the pros and cons of company and personal pensions. Call 0800-255200.

Loose Change on 28 October referred to a new Gold credit card from Bank of Scotland. That should have read Royal Bank of Scotland.

The fund manager's recipe for success: buy when the market crashes

By Alison Eadie



Fund of knowledge: Michael Hart, who has managed the Foreign & Colonial Investment Trust since 1969

Fund managers are mostly an anonymous breed, yet their decisions are crucial to the performance of the personal equity plans, unit and investment trusts into which small savers pour their cash. How do they make their decisions? How much scope for flair and outperformance is there given the investment parameters of the various funds they manage? Do they sometimes get it badly wrong? Today sees the start of a new series asking managers of leading funds how they do their job.

Foreign & Colonial Investment Trust, the first public investment trust, has remained true to its objectives since its launch in 1868. It now has £1.6bn of assets, an army of loyal small investors, attracted by the monthly savings scheme, who make up 49 per cent of the total shareholding, compared with the average for listed companies of 17 per cent.

Michael Hart, chairman of Foreign & Colonial Management, who has been manager of the trust since 1969, says its style is to be slightly contrarian. "We are prepared to buy into difficult markets in the expectation that they will recover."

So far the strategy has paid off. In the prolonged bear market of 1974, F&CIT drew up a list of good-quality com-

panies that were on price earnings multiples of around 5 and yields of 10 per cent. It bought into those companies in the expectation that in five years their ratings would be far higher. They were.

The same strategy was adopted in the stock market crash of 1987. "We increased our gearing and bought into the crash," says Mr Hart. Last year it nibbled away at bonds, feeling that inflation fears were overdone.

The trust has also hand-somely outperformed the FT All-Share Index since the late 1980s, helped by the narrowing of the discount to net assets. Its shares are now at a discount of under 1 per cent.

Not everything goes to plan, however, and Mr Hart concedes he has had some nervous moments. There was a 30-month period of under-performance in the early 1980s. "We do also have a few dogs occasionally," he admits.

In the first half of this year F&CIT's worst-performing stocks were Eurotunnel, which showed a 38 per cent decline, and Eastern Group, which was down 16 per cent. Hanson's bid for Eastern has changed the outlook for the electricity company but the Eurotunnel situation looks dire, admits Mr Hart. By contrast, Mr Hart's most successful investment was BTR, which he spotted at an early

stage at the start of the 1970s. He met Sir Owen Green, who built up the industrial conglomerate in the 1970s and 1980s, liked what he saw and bought shares. BTR is still F&CIT's fifth largest equity holding, although some shares were sold as a precautionary measure when Sir Owen retired.

Meeting management is an important element of picking and holding stocks, says Mr Hart. He likes to see the directors of the companies he invests in once a year to make sure everything is on track.

"We are fundamental investors," he explains. "We look at all yardsticks, like share price to earnings ratios, yields and cashflows, take a view on management and take advantage of euphoria and gloom in markets."

Mr Hart, whose expertise is the UK, relies on input from his F&C colleagues for the US, Japanese, European, Asian and Latin American parts of the portfolio.

Investment in the more volatile, smaller markets is often done through another F&C trust, like F&C Emerging Markets Investment Trust. F&CIT keeps more than 40 per cent of its assets in the UK to ensure it meets its target of growing the dividend faster than inflation and to be tax efficient.

Since the ending of exchange controls in 1979, the trust has played currency markets to good effect. "We do it through loans," Mr Hart says. "If we want to reduce exposure to the dollar, we borrow dollars and put them to work in another area."

F&CIT took a big bet on the Japanese yen in the first half of this year, which initially did not work out well as the yen appreciated against sterling. However, the 25 per cent fall in the yen in the second half has provided a boost to net asset value. At the end of September some 13 per cent of the trust's assets were in Japan, but its currency exposure to Japan was only 9 per cent. Yen borrowings have shrunk from £130m to around £85m.

The ability to borrow in times of inflation and rising stock markets is also a plus, says Mr Hart. "The combination of currency and gearing has made quite a contribution to the trust over the years."

The trust was one of the earliest into Japan in the early 1960s, went into Hong Kong,

Thailand and other Asian markets ahead of the pack, and made forays into Latin America before it became fashionable.

More recently it has invested in South Africa through five blue chip stocks and is presently sizing up Russia. "We could make a move there before too long," says Mr Hart.

New moves are carefully weighed because F&CIT invests for the long term. It has holdings in some 250 stocks held on average for five years. Some have been held for 30 years.

Mr Hart reads investment publications widely, but places no great faith in gurus or theories. "It is a question of common sense and taking advantage of the excesses of the market," he maintains.

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DAILY EXPRESS, 1st NOVEMBER 1995

A gem of a purchase

Invest in old jewellery, not new. By John Andrew

Are you thinking of giving jewellery as a gift this Christmas? If so, you could do far better buying good antique or period pieces than purchasing brand new. Not only is the quality likely to be better, but there can be significant price advantages.

For example, a one-carat solitaire diamond ring that retails new at £4,000, could be purchased for half this sum at auction, or from a dealer.

One of the reasons why old jewellery is a better buy is that new pieces attract VAT at 17.5 per cent. Pieces sold by private vendors at auction do not. Old jewellery sold by dealers only attracts VAT on their profit margin.

The cost of manufacturing old jewellery has also been absorbed by a previous generation. Today its value is determined purely by supply and demand in the market.

Brand-new pieces retail at a price that covers manufacturing costs and provides a profit to the maker and retailer. The result is a retail price considerably above that at which the items sell on the secondary market.

Disappointed vendors of jewellery bought new a few years previously discover this to their cost when they decide to sell.

On the other hand, items purchased on the secondary market have a far greater potential of retaining their value. Indeed, it is possible that over time this could even increase. For example, Mark

Evans of Bentley & Co in New Bond Street has recently repurchased a cased set of five Fabergé miniature nephrite Easter eggs, which he sold in the 1960s for £150. This year he paid the original purchaser £6,500.

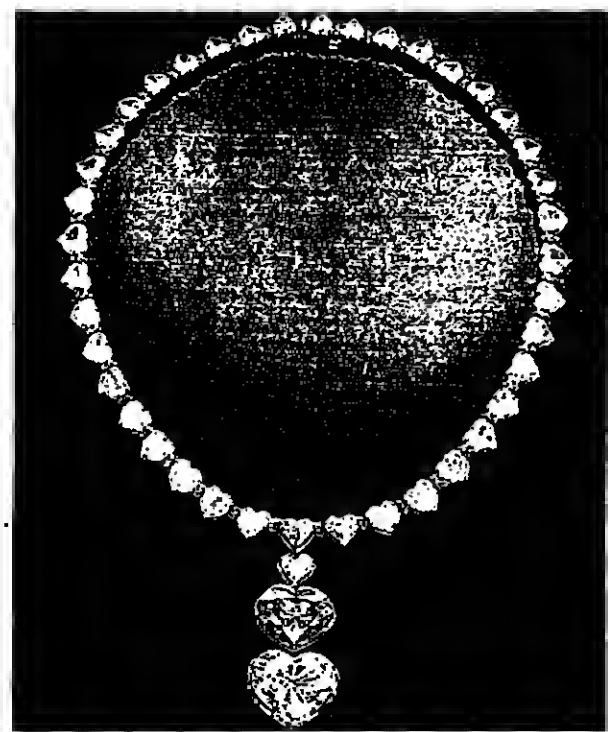
As David Warren of Christie's neatly replied when asked if jewellery was a good investment: "It depends on what you pay." Beauty is certainly in the eye of the beholder and the interaction of supply and demand at auction can result in some extraordinary saleroom prices.

For example, at Bonhams in September, two equally determined bidders battled over a pair of cufflinks in the form of well-modelled owl heads set with small diamond eyes. It was anticipated they would realise £1,000. They sold for £2,760, including buyer's premium.

On the day of the sale, an identical pair, save that the eyes were rubies, were being offered at £850 by Anthea AG Antiques at Gray's antiques centre in London.

A prudent buyer will seek jewellery from both dealers and auctions. Both can yield good buys. Equally, jewellery from both sources can be pricey in relation to the market as a whole.

Putting a value on a piece of jewellery is a complex matter. Quality is of paramount importance. This embraces both the craftsmanship of the jeweller and the size and



Fancy piece: Not for the story-broke - the Begum Blue, a heart-shaped deep blue diamond sold for £5m by Christie's this week

quality of the stones used. The grading of stones is a very complex area and requires considerable expertise.

Condition is also important as damage detracts from an item's value. Alterations also have a negative affect, but pieces in original cases sell for far greater sums than those that are not in their contemporary boxes.

"Buy only what you like," is the advice of Alexandra Rhodes of Sotheby's. Should you therefore want to sell at some time in the future, quality pieces will be easier to realise. Signed pieces by Cartier, Boucheron, Van Cleef & Arpels, and other international names, are firm favourites with buyers.

If you have to view jewellery as an investment, the secret is to anticipate what will be sought tomorrow. My tip is the 1970s work of Andrew Olma, which typifies the decade.

For a copy of The Bentley Collection, an illustrated compendium of fine jewels for sale, telephone 0171 629 0651. Several good jewellers are at Gray's antiques centre, 58 Davies Street, London W1. The Fine Art and Antiques Fair will be held at Olympia (London) from 15 to 21 November. For information telephone 0171 370 8188.

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Your bookshelves may hold hidden treasure

By Frances Howell

If your bookshelves bulge with your late great aunt's favourite reading, then they may also be lined with gold. Second-hand books can be surprisingly valuable. Although the principal rule of the second-hand, or antiquarian, trade is: "A rare book is one you don't have", you might still find the odd nugget, particularly if great aunt Maud had a taste for scouring second-hand bookshops, or house clearances.

In ascending order of importance, age, absolute rarity, beauty, and the importance of the text have the greatest bearing on a book's value. Associations can also be important. A selection of bible readings, published in 1850 and which was worth about 50p in its own right, was recently sold for £1,000, because it was inscribed to a sick soldier in the Crimea, and signed "F. Nightingale".

Six late-18th century Gothic novels, listed as being "really horrid" by a character in *Northington Abbey*, are of little literary merit. However, Jane Austen fans are prepared to pay an arm and a leg for any surviving copies.

A book will not be valuable simply because it is old and an important literary work. Even an old book may be one of many copies around today. As a general rule, however, any pre-1800 text, provided that it is rare, will be worth something.

Even recent works can be sought-after. For example, a presentation copy of *The Sun in the Face* should fetch considerably more than its cover price, as the text has become significant, and its author became disinclined to court publicity. In contrast, it is said to be difficult to find a copy of Baroness Thatcher's memoirs that is not signed.

Some of the very earliest Penguins are worth a few pounds. For example, the first Penguin, Maugham's biography of Shelley, is worth £80 to £100 in decent condition. A first edition of *Naked Lunch* will also be in paperback, and is worth around £200.

Several 20th century poets published their first volumes privately, which they often later disowned. These publications would be in paperback, and there is a market for these usually slim volumes. A

copy of W H Auden's first book of poetry was published by Stephen Spender. The book, bound in coloured paper, would fetch several hundred pounds.

A few coffee spots, or one missing page can cut a book's value dramatically. At the other end of the scale, 20th century texts can be worth four figures by dint of a dust jacket, especially if it is a popular text.

For example, a first edition of Ian Fleming's first Bond novel, *Casino Royale*, in its dust jacket could fetch about £2,000 in good condition. An immaculate copy recently sold for \$12,500 (£7,900). However, if the dust jacket is shredded or missing, the value falls to about £100. Similarly, a first edition of *The Great Gatsby*, which is renowned for its dust jacket, will sell for \$15,000 to \$25,000, depending on condition. Without the dust jacket, it will be worth a 20th of this sum.

If you are interested in collecting for investment, Arthur Freeman of leading antiquarian bookseller Bernard Quaritch, which deals mainly in pre-20th century texts, recommends developing an area of expertise that is, as yet, relatively unexplored, and in which you may get a step ahead of dealers. "I would be surprised if anybody had yet fully researched, for example, the history of accountancy textbooks, and there are a lot of them around. The catch is - how much would anyone pay for an accountancy textbook?"

To develop your knowledge of the field you should go to antiquarian books fairs, such as the Provincial Book Fair, which travels around the country, and is held at the Russell Hotel, London, once a month.

You should also browse around the bookshops in Cecil Court, WC1, which deal in 20th century texts. It is also a good idea to read publications such as *The Book Collector*, available to order from 0181 200 5004.

Don't try to get valuations over the phone, it is impossible to value a book without examining it. And don't expect a dealer to take the time to make a free valuation, unless you are a prospective customer.

The way to better motor insurance

Upmarket insurance companies are declaring war on their cut-price brethren. By Clifford German



Road sage: One in four motorists has no such rescue in prospect if they break down

The top end of the motor insurance market is fighting back against the cut-price insurers that have dominated the market in recent years, helping to drag down premiums. This week Zurich Municipal, the leading direct motor insurer specialising in public sector employees - civil servants, teachers, doctors and the like - teamed up with Green Flag, the third largest operator in the breakdown market, to add a free basic breakdown insurance to its standard policies without any increase in premiums.

ZM policyholders who break down more than a mile from home will be able to have their cars towed free to a local garage if they cannot be repaired on the spot. In addition, policyholders can buy a range of Green Flag breakdown services, including a Home Call service, a nation-wide breakdown service including free car recovery and transport to anywhere in the UK, and a Europe-wide service. All three can be bought for £66.63 a year, roughly half the cost of being a member of the AA or RAC.

The AA has roughly 8 million members. RAC has 5 million and Green Flag about 3 million, but

some 7 million motorists, around one in four, have no breakdown cover and depend on being able to call out a local garage, according to Peter Ablett, ZM's marketing manager.

As 8 million cars break down each year, about one in every three cars on the road, it leaves several million motorists facing a stressful and potentially expensive experience.

The purchasing power of the big insurers enables them to buy breakdown services in bulk. Breakdown insurance will likely become a standard part of motor insurance policies within a few years, Mr Ablett says.

Most of the low-cost policies motorists have pursued so enthusiastically in recent years contain significant limitations on claims and cover. Two-thirds of all UK motorists have comprehensive policies, but many "standard" comprehensive policies exclude the cost of hiring a replacement car, the legal cost of claiming against other drivers in a disputed accident, theft of car radios and stereos, replacement of broken windows and personal accident and medical expenses.

Excess charges, which motorists pay themselves, also loom larger

than they once did. Most drivers accept a modest voluntary excess in order to reduce their premiums. But many low-cost motor policies now insist on a compulsory excess charge of as much as £250, which motorists must meet out of their own pocket in the event of an accident. This effectively excludes protection against a much larger number of claims.

A combination of fewer comprehensive policies and increased competition, especially from the direct-sales insurers, which eliminate both brokers' commissions and branch costs, has led to a well-known fall in average premiums in the last two or three years. Motorists are already able to buy a number of add-ons to supplement the standard no-frills policies. Anyone who wants to be covered for legal costs can take out an Uninsured Loss Recovery policy, which normally costs as little as £8 to £12 a year as an add-on to a conventional policy.

Alternatively, motorists can chase further discounts for improved security devices for their cars. Insurers have traditionally offered lower premiums for cars that are kept in locked garages, and many specialist policies, including most classic car

cover, require cars to be garaged. The AA this week pointed out that motor insurance premiums have begun to fall, reflecting the fall in car crime of around 10 per cent in each of the last two years.

There is no room for complacency, however. The UK remains the car-crime capital of Europe, if not the world. Almost 10,000 cars are stolen every week. Three out of 10 are never recovered, and of those that are recovered, three out of 10 suffer more than £2,000 worth of damage.

The insurance industry paid out £700m in claims last year, but many incidents of theft from cars are not reported and the true scale and cost of car crime could be substantially higher. Incidentally, the majority of cars stolen are eight to 10 years old and are stripped to supply the car spares market.

To counter the costs, some insurers now offer discounts of 5 to 17.5 per cent on premiums for cars fitted with approved safety devices. High security wheel locks cost upwards of £30 but can make up their cost in less than two years. Electronic car immobilisers cost around £130 from AA shops, including installation, but can often save up to £100 a year on

premiums, according to the AA. It quotes a saving of £105 a year on a basic premium of £470 for a married woman in south-east London driving a VW Golf worth £5,000.

Costs rise to £275 to £350 for combined alarms and immobilisers, but they can pay for themselves in six months on high-risk cars like the Ford Escort RS Turbo. It claims even greater success for the Tracker system, which costs £199 to fit and an annual subscription of £61 a year, and often allows police to home-in on caches of stolen cars.

Another direct insurer, the Leeds-based Privilege Insurance, which caters for non-standard risks, offers discounts of 12.5 per cent on Cobra vehicle security systems. It also offers an average discount of about 10 per cent to drivers who successfully complete Masterdrive, a driver safety course that costs around £50 and lasts about two hours.

Drivers buying used cars can also buy another service from Wiltshire-based HPI Equifax, which for £28.50 will run a check on second-hand cars and provide purchasers with a guarantee of title, or pay out if claims are made within 12 months.

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When it comes to your premiums, you are what you do

By Mark Wood

Insurance companies are constantly looking for ways to assess the risk that decides insurance premiums. Admiral, the direct motor insurer, believes that the colour of the car is a determining factor; while Zurich looks to the stars for its clues, and claims that crashes correlate with birth signs.

But for as long as the industry can remember, the occupation of the policyholder has featured on car insurance proposal forms. You may live in the same district, and drive an identical car, but premiums vary dramatically depending on what you do for a living.

Your occupation also affects the cost of household insurance, and it is beginning to have an impact (along with age and gender) on what you pay for mortgage protection policies.

Occupations prone to sickness, accidents and especially redundancies can pay 20 to 30 per cent above average; secure occupations are charged similar amounts less than the norm.

But the biggest differences affect the cost of motor insurance. Here, Nineties-style political correctness goes out of the window, and happy families stereotypes take over. Miss Mouse, the librarian, is a safe driver; and Mr Glitz, the rock star, will drive his pink limousine into a swimming pool.

Actuaries – those chaps who make accountants look glamorous in comparison – decide how much of a risk you represent.

Even if you never use the car for work – they say – your job reflects your lifestyle. While no insurer looks only at occupation to calculate an insurance premium, it continues to be a deciding factor when underwriters agree to cover you – or not – and if so how much it will cost you.

Journalists, for example, find their premiums loaded because of their job. This is because the "typical" hack is pushy in pursuit of a scoop, works long, unsocial hours, and follows them by some long, hard socialising. And public relations types, their opposite numbers in the media, are tarred with the same brush.

At one end of the scale the safest professions, in the eyes of the insurance underwriters, are clerks, bank managers and teachers.

At the opposite extreme, musicians and night-club owners are viewed by insurers with deep concern. They are seen as highly emotional people who lead stressful and irregular lives, return from their job at dead of night, work amid a high consumption of drink and drugs and probably opt for unusual and attractive cars.

They are expected to have driving incidents that would seriously sully their claims records.

Also, if the policyholder is famous, insurance companies expect that he or she regularly gives lifts to other household names. An accident that injured a passenger who was a famous actress could have heavy financial repercussions if the accident ended a promising career, and cut off high earnings for life. The

ensuing law suit could run to millions.

With such a high potential risk, insurers are likely to load the premium. The tables (right) show how premiums would differ from one occupation to another in two different examples.

Your job also affects household insurance premiums although the connection is somewhat more tenuous, and occupational premium loadings are relatively small for home and contents cover compared with car insurance.

For buildings cover, there is little discrimination among the professions. Premiums are determined mainly by the size and rebuild costs of the house and geological factors such as the subsoil on which the house is built and the presence of underground springs or mines, so premiums are relatively constant.

There are some exceptions. Occupations that involve frequent or prolonged absences from home – such as airline staff, sports professionals, oil-rig workers or merchant seamen – are seen to leave their property more vulnerable to risk than a civil servant with regular working hours.

These characteristics may not be recognised in a loaded premium, attracting instead policy restrictions, such as a limited theft cover if the house is unoccupied for long periods.

One underwriter might take the view that a fine-art dealer is a high-theft risk, and that thieves may stop at nothing to get away with a valuable haul – even to the extent of using explosives to gain entry.

Likewise, a famous actress may entertain other famous people in her home, which could result in a high liability claim in the event of a tree falling on to the house, for example.

For contents cover, occupation can have more effect on premiums. Again, once the usual variables of postcode, number of bedrooms and quality of security alarms are taken into account, the householder's job can be a factor, influencing the chances of the house being occupied during the day and the prospect of high-value possessions in the house.

For example, on a 3-bedroom semi in Winchester worth £85,000, and with contents worth £30,000, a civil servant would pay £74 for buildings cover and £103 for contents.

A journalist would fare slightly worse at £96 for buildings and £103 for contents. But a rock star would be hammered for £116 and £228 respectively.

Taking another example, on a detached two-bedroom house in Chesterfield, Derbyshire worth £35,000, with contents worth £35,000, the figures would be £112 and £116 for the civil servant, £119 and £228 for the journalist, and £125 and £228 for the rock star.

The good news is that premiums are still going down, and, according to the AA's British Insurance Premium Index, you should now be paying around 5 per cent less for home insurance than this time last year, and about 4 per cent less for car insurance.

How your job affects motor premiums

A 25 year-old female, living in central London (SW1), with a clean driving record and a Ford Escort 1.4:

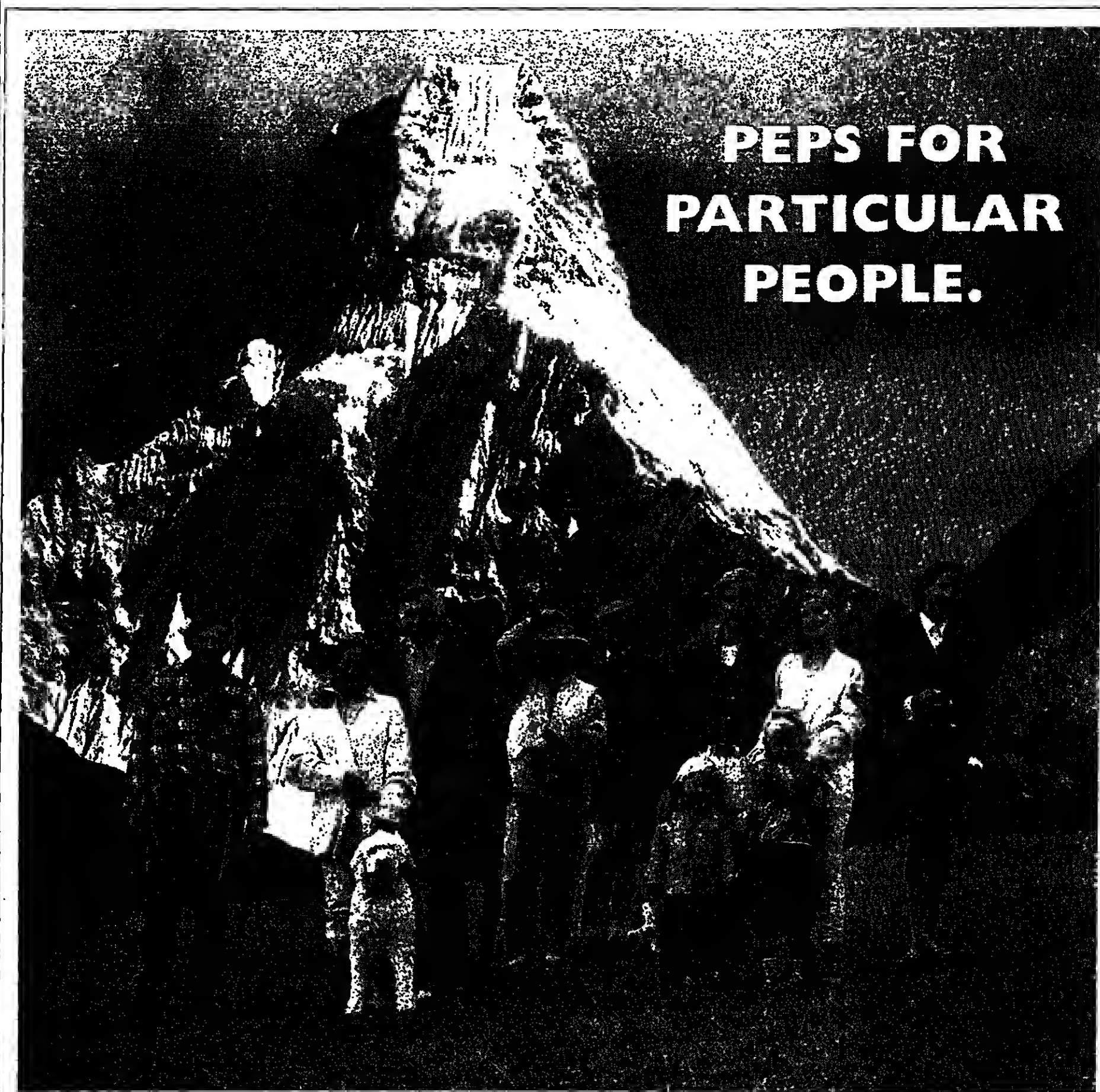
Bank worker	£395
Teacher	£395
Solicitor	£406
PR officer	£427
Journalist	£429
Model	£587
Actress	£818

A 55 year old male, living in Whitechurch, Hampshire (RG28), driving the same Ford Escort:

Bank manager	£168
Teacher	£177
Solicitor	£184
PR officer	£187
Journalist	£200
Model	£281
Actor	£377



Risk factors: Peter Sellers in librarian mode (left) is a safer bet than the accident-prone Inspector Clouseau (right) – actuarially speaking



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Get a smaller or older car.
Fit a security alarm, immobiliser, tracking device or even a simple steering lock – not only will they get you an insurance discount, they will also reduce the likelihood of the car being stolen or broken into. Opt for a voluntary excess – but remember, you pay the first £100 or £200 of a claim.

Home

Fit locks on all windows and doors.
Have a burglar alarm fitted.
Get a Neighbourhood Watch scheme going.
Have someone who stays at home during the day.
Get a large dog.

Don't

Leave the car on the street overnight.
Accept the first quote you get – a broker may be able to get you a better deal than a direct writer, simply because they have access to a greater range of insurers.

money

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Telephone	% Rate and period	Max. adv. %	Fee	Incentive	Redemption penalty
Fixed rates					
Hinckley & Rugby BS	0800 774499	0.75 to 1/12/96	70	\$250	3 yrs unemployment ins
Chelmsley BS	01242 271441	4.74 to 1/12/98	80	\$195	Free redundancy ins to 31/12/96
Lambeth BS	0800 225221	7.44 to 1/1/01	95	\$250	0.5% of advance
Variable rates					
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	1.99 to 1/2/97	90	—	Refund valuation fee
Greenwich BS	0181 858 8212	4.49 for 2 yrs	95	—	1st 5 yrs: 6mths interest
National Counties	01372 742211	6.49 for 5 yrs	70	—	1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed
First time buyers fixed rates					
Bristol & West BS	0800 100117	0.95 to 30/11/96	90	\$275	To 30/11/00: 5mths interest
Skipton BS	01756 700500	6.49 to 31/1/99	95	—	1st 5 yrs: 2.5% of advance
TSB	Local branch	8.44 to 30/9/00	100	\$250	Refund valuation fee
First time buyers variable rates					
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	1.79 for 1 yr	95	—	\$150 cashback
Harfax BS	Local branch	4.99 to 31/1/97	90	—	Free val, £250 cashback
Greenwich BS	0181 858 8212	5.49 to 3 yrs	95	—	1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed

Telephone	APR	Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 for 3 years)
Unsecured		
Midland Bank	0800 180180	15.40
NAB BS	0800 808080	15.50
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	16.20
Secured		
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	8.80
Royal Bank of Scotland	via branch	9.80
First Direct	0800 242424	10.30

Telephone	Account	Authorised % pm	APR	Unauthorised % pm	APR
Overdrafts					
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	Current	0.75	9.5	2.18
Alliance & Leicester BS	0500 959595	Alliance	0.75	9.5	2.20
Abbey National	0500 200500	Current	0.75	9.5	2.18

Telephone	Card	Min. income	Rate %	APR %	Annual fee
Credit cards					
Standard	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	0.98G	12.40
Coutts & Co	0171 753 1718	Visa	—	0.9875	13.2
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	1.00	14.60
Gold cards					
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Visa	\$20,000	0.5625M	11.42
Royal Bank of Scotland	01702 362890	Visa	\$20,000	1.05	14.50
NatWest Bank	0800 200400	Visa	\$20,000	1.14	15.90

Telephone	Payment by direct debit	Payment by other methods
Store cards		
John Lewis	Local store	—
Marks & Spencer	01244 681681	1.90A
Sears	Via store	1.94

APR: Annualised percentage rate.
 A: 1.55% (20.5% APR for all but over £1k).
 G: annual rate 5% above R. Fleming base rate.
 M: Equivalent to base rate.
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Best savings rates

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
Instant Access					
Portman BS	01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	\$100	5.00
Skipton BS	01756 700511	3 High Street	Instant	\$2,000	5.50
Co-operative Bank	0345 252000	Patfinder	Instant	\$5,000	5.90
Northern Rock BS	0500 505000	Go Direct	Instant	\$20,000	6.10
Instant					
Britannia BS	01538 392808	Capital Trust	Postal	\$2,000	5.50
Leeds & Hallbeck BS	0113 243 8292	Albion	Postal	\$10,000	6.00
Northern Rock BS	0500 505000	Go Direct	Postal	\$20,000	6.10
B'ham Midshires BS	0645 720721	First Class	Postal	\$25,000	6.20
Fixed Rate					
Nottingham BS	0115 948 1444	Postmark	7 day P	\$2,500	5.90
Scarborough BS	0800 590578	Scarborough 50	50 day	\$1,000	6.50
Northern Rock BS	0500 505000	Postal 50	90 day P	\$10,000	6.80
Harifax BS	Local branch	Special Reserve	1 year bond	\$10,000	6.90
Co-operative Bank					
Portman BS	0345 252000	Patfinder	Instant	\$5,000	5.90
Scarborough BS	0800 590578	Scarborough 50	50 day	\$1,000	6.40
Leopold Joseph & Sons	0171 588 2323	40 Day Notice	40 day	\$10,000	6.9875

Telephone	Investment	Term	Rate	Maturity
Fixed Rate				
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Investment Certs	1 yr bond	\$1,000
Leeds & Hallbeck BS	0113 244 0357	Investment Bond	2 yr bond	\$5,000
B'ham Midshires BS	0645 720721	Centurion Fund	3 yr bond	\$5,000
B'ham Midshires BS	0645 720721	Millennium Bond	4 yr bond	\$5,000
Variable Rate				
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	5 year	\$8,575	7.50 F
Allied Trust Bank	0171 626 0879	5 year	\$9,000	7.50
Wentworth BS	01383 627727	5 year	\$3,000	7.20
Melton Mowbray BS	01664 63937	5 year	\$1	7.10

Telephone	Investment	Term	Rate	Maturity
Financial Assurance				
Financial Assurance	0181 490 9157	1 year	\$5,000	4.90F
Premium Life	01444 458721	2 year	\$1,000	5.50F
Swiss Life	01732 582000	3 year	\$5,000	5.70F
Premium Life	01444 458721	4 year	\$1,000	5.90F
Britannia Life	0141 248 2000	5 year	\$5,000	7.00F

Telephone	Investment	Term	Rate	Maturity
Co-operative Bank				
Co-operative Bank	01481 710527	Patfinder Worldwide	Instant	\$5,000
Newcastle Bank, Gibr	00 350 76168	Nova 90 O'shore	90 day	\$25,000
Alliance & Leicester BS	01624 663566	Investment Bond	1 yr bond	\$10,000
B'ham Midshires, Gibr	01481 700680	Fixed Account	31.1.99	\$5,000

Investment Accounts	1 month	3 month	6 month	1 year
Income Bonds				
Capital Bonds	Series 1	5 year	\$100	7.75 F
First Option Bonds	Series 1	12 month	\$1,000	6.40 F
Pensioners' Guaranteed Income Bond	Series 2	5 year	\$500	7.50 F

Investment Accounts	1 month	3 month	6 month	1 year
Income Bonds				
Capital Bonds	Series 1	5 year	\$100	7.75 F
First Option Bonds	Series 1	12 month	\$1,000	6.40 F
Pensioners' Guaranteed Income Bond	Series 2	5 year	\$500	7.50 F

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 N: net rate
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FEAR OF FINANCE
Clifford German

Employers have spent the last 15 years slaying the union dragon, with a little help from Baroness Thatcher. They have been rewarded by success in holding down wage costs. Even in a recovery, earnings are barely keeping pace with inflation. But what workers have failed to wrest from employers through pressure tactics, the financial services industry is about to try to do by a combination of flattery and cajolery.

IFA Promotioo, the umbrella group that represents 15,000 independent financial advisers, this week praised British employers for being among the best in the world, providing £69bn worth of benefits last year, an average of £3,200 for every employee, and 12 per cent of gross national product.

The total includes £21bn worth of contributions to pension funds and more than £23bn in social security contributions, mainly National Insurance payments on behalf of their employees. Another £16bn is listed under benefits in kind, which includes £5bn worth of cars and motoring, £3.6bn in subsidised catering, £2.2bn worth of help with house relocation, and £1bn worth of tied housing. A further £7bn is listed under training, while medical and other insurance benefits amount to less than £1bn.

Over the past decade, pension payments have increased by 50 per cent; social security contributions have roughly doubled, income in kind has quadrupled and training has more than trebled. Benefit payments have grown faster than earnings.

But the IFA warns that there is no room for complacency. Although the message of declining state benefits is unmistakable, individuals are not coming forward to take up the burden of financing an increasing proportion of future pension, health insurance and long-term care costs in anything like the necessary numbers. A substantial shortfall in provisions seems inevitable.

IFA Promotioo wants to persuade employers that they could, should and will have to assume a bigger share of the burden that the state is determined to unload. By European standards they get away lightly. Unfortunately, employers are out in a mood to increase their share of contributions. Large companies increasingly treat their workforces as a short-term resource. Smaller companies, which are showing growth in employment, are traditionally less generous than larger companies.

Projections for the next five years suggest that employers' contributions to pension, health and welfare provision will actually fall slightly, and that the shortfalls will start to widen.

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staying in



Television

by Gerard Gilbert

Monday
Horizon 8pm BBC2. Last summer a comet smashed into Jupiter and ignited a firestorm the size of Australia. What chance something similar happening here on Earth? (757136).
The Beatles - All Together Now 8.30pm BBC1. The Beatles' Mark Taper takes off with celebs' memories of the Fab Four and the UK premiere of the video for their "new" single, "Free as a Bird" (83921).
Panorama 9.40pm BBC1. Princess Diana (above) upstages the Old Firm again as she talks about life, love and everything (266001).

Tuesday
Sportsnight Special 8pm BBC1. And then there was one... Nottingham Forest play Lyon as the last British survivor in the UEFA Cup (30313641).
Without Walls: Unpeeled - the Roman Ory 9pm BBC2. Is it true? No heavy indulgence in such classics as "Oh How She Could Kick" (7063).
Film: Naked (Mike Leigh 1993 UK) 10pm BBC4. Incendiary performance by David Thewlis (above) as a modern angry young man for the 1990s (840773).

Wednesday
Slice of Life 8pm BBC2. New series charting the changes in Britain's food habits over 50 years begins, inevitably, with wartime and postwar rationing (8218).
Modern Times: Man Seeks Woman 9pm BBC2. (above). Take three single men and follow them on the dates they've arranged through the small ads (230483).
My Secret Life 9.50pm BBC2. Hot on the heels of tonight's Screen Two, Priest, a real Catholic priest talks about his life as an active homosexual (868483).

Thursday
Public Eye 8pm BBC2. A look at the affair of 32-year-old failed medical student Brian McKinnon - alias 17-year-old schoolboy Brandon Lee (4304).
Secret Lives: Edward VIII 9pm BBC4. Further damning evidence about the current royal film: The Hand That Rocks the Cradle (Curtis Hanson 1992 US) 9.05pm BBC4. (above). Rebecca De Mornay is wonderfully chilly as the vengeful widow pretending to be a suburban nanny (443439).

Friday
Children in Need 7pm BBC1. As always, our advice is to grieve early and go out for the night (85347).
Dressing for Breakfast 8pm BBC4 (above). Beattie Edney plays Louise - single, bright and attractive and looking for Mr Right. Sound familiar? This sitcom even has Ellen's place in the schedules (3453).
Film: Night and the City (Jules Dassin 1950 US) 12.30am BBC4. Film noir set in London, with Richard Widmark as a would-be wrestling promoter (468038).

Radio

by Robert Hanks

Secret Theatres of the Mind 9.25pm R3. Michael (gnarled) tries to understand how abnormal mental states (including schizophrenia, dementia and Alzheimer's disease) work from the inside, with the help of interviews and (possibly too many) sound effects.

Hawaii, Oh Why? 9pm R2. Unforgivable title for a fairly inexcusable feature on the rise and fall of Hawaiian-style popular music, featuring such classics as "Oh How She Could Kick" (7063).
Hack! Wack! Wack! 9pm R2. Martin Kellner does some appalling things with ukuleles.

This Happy Breed 10am R4 FM. Pigeon-fanciers - "A secret network of 50,000 men," as this programme rather alarmingly describes them - are the first of three all-male organisations to be subjected to the scrutiny of Jennifer Holden and her tape recorder.

Old Harry's Game 6.30pm R4. Probably the first radio sitcom inspired by Paradise Lost, with writer Andy Hamilton starring as Satan. Nice idea, but it relies too heavily on crowd-pleasing jokes about the torments awaiting lawyers and estate agents in the hereafter.

Print the Legend 10am R4 FM. Part two of Christopher Frayling's excellent series on how film has interpreted history, looks at cinema epics, from moralising Hollywood blockbusters like *The Ten Commandments* and *Ben Hur* to the Italian musclemen sagas of the Sixties.

Sunday Television and Radio

BBC1

6.45 **Some Girls Do** (Ralph Thomas 1969 UK). Cretinous spoof updating *Bulldog Drummond* with the spy-obsessed *Stardust* (13890).
 8.15 **Discovering Eve** (S) (8905068).
 9.30 **Breakfast with Frost** (85838).
 9.30 **First Light** (S) (58838).
 10.00 **See Hear** (S) (72567).
 10.30 **Sueños - World Spanish** (S) (1284105).
 10.45 **This Multimedia Business** (S) (7985398).
 11.00 **The 11th Hour** (S) (66646).
 12.00 **Countryside** (S) (66190).
 12.30 **News: On the Record** (2161).
 1.30 **EastEnders Omnibus** (S) (5955068).
 2.55 **Perry Mason**. David Soul guest stars (6427722).
 4.25 **The Bookworm**. Griff Rhys Jones on Jonathan Swift and *Maeve Binchy* (S) (6532426).
 4.55 **The Clothes Show** (S) (1609797).
 5.20 **The Great Antiques Hunt**. In the Cotswolds (S) (4406567).
 6.00 **News: Weather** (756451).
 6.20 **Local News** (371819).
 6.25 **Songs of Praise**. A special children's edition from Bendrigg Lodge near Kendal (S) (150180).
 7.00 **Just William** (S) (3616).
 7.30 **Showstoppers**. With Robson and Jerome, Bob Monkhouse and Kim Wilde (S) (540109).
 8.20 **Children in Need** (S) (891838).
 8.30 **The Vicar of Dibley**. The Songs of Praise team come to Dibley (S) (89711).
 9.00 **Flood Cut**. The beleaguered Urquhart has a flash of inspiration (S) (193744).
 9.55 **News: Weather** (737432).
 10.10 **In Search of Happiness**. A Buddhist monk comes up with the most convincing suggestion for the would-be happy - don't look for happiness. You rather wish Angus Deayton had taken this bit of advice four weeks ago (S) (506242).
 10.50 **Heart of the Matter**. On the 50th anniversary of the Nuremberg Trials, Joan Bakewell chairs a debate from the original courtroom (216722).
 11.40 **Plenty** (Fred Schepisi 1985 UK). Britain's postwar decline seen through the eyes of wartime *My Darling Clementine*. Less preachy than the play, and with some good performances from Charles Dance and John Gielgud (S) (547155).
 1.40 **Regions: Wales**. 12.00pm *Homeland*. 10.10 Kane's Wales. 10.40 In Search of Happiness. 11.20 Heart of the Matter Special. 12.10 Film: *Plenty*. 11.25pm *Now You're Talking*. 3.20 Big Al. 3.35 *TOTP*. 4.20 *Cartoon*. 10.10 *Tales of Maynooth*. 11.05 In Search of Happiness. 11.45 Heart of the Matter Special. 12.35 Inside Usher News. 12.40 Film: *Sticky Fingers*.

BBC2

7.20 **Children's BBC: The Adventures of Skippy** (1117221). 7.45 *Playdays* (795109). 8.05 *Casper Classics* (808258). 8.20 *Mortimer and Anabel* (809451). 8.35 *Jockmacnife: Make Way for Monsters* (7083797). 8.50 *800* (6006635). 9.05 *The Animals of Farthing Wood* (9139703). 9.30 *Skeleton Warriors* (7144242). 9.55 *Travel Bug* (7225161). 10.25 *Grange Hill* (4916242). 10.50 *The Queen's Nose* (9980906).
 11.15 **Growing Up Wild**. Terry Nutkins on colour in the animal kingdom (S) (1409762).
 11.40 **Star Trek** (R) (4960345).
 12.30 **The Sunday Show** (S) (8555659).
 1.15 **The O Zone**. Björk talks and Rosette's views on English people (S) (2365432).
 1.30 **Regional Programmes** (595567).
 2.00 **Top Gear Rally Report**. Day one of the Network Q RAC Rally (S) (71838).
 3.00 **Yentl** (Barbra Streisand 1983 US). Surprisingly bouncy Streisand musical in which the girl disguises herself as a boy in order to get an education in a male-dominated East European Jewish community (S) (56259155).
 5.10 **Rugby Special**. Highlights England vs South Africa, Scotland vs Western Samoa, and Ireland vs Fiji (7844155).
 6.10 **Trials of Life**. Aggression (R) (S) (613074).
 7.00 **Top Gear Rally Report**. Round-up of the first day's action from the Network Q RAC Rally (S) (472328).
 7.35 **The Art Marathon**. See *Preview*, p32 (S) (863567).
 8.20 **The Money Programme**. Investigating whether a possible European directive, forcing manufacturers to label all artificially sweetened products, will have a severe impact on the food and drink industries (802616).
 9.00 **Victoria Wood as Seen on TV**. Comedy from 1986, where Wood was joined by Julie Walters and Patricia Routledge - a welcome chance to see this talented comedienne out of her Hyacinth persona (R) (6161).
 9.30 **The Mrs Merton Show**. The four-chal show hostess gently ribs Matthew Kelly, Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer, and George Best (S) (30432).
 10.00 **The Colour Purple** (Steven Spielberg 1985 US). See *The Big Picture*, p32 (684161).
 12.30 **Mrs Cage** (Robert Altman 1992 US). Respectable housewife Anne Bancroft walks into a police station and confesses to a murder. It ain't that simple of course (352137). To 1.45am.
Regions: Wales. 1.30pm *Welsh Lobby*. 5.10 *Scrum*. 5.10 *1.30pm Welsh Lobby*. 5.10 *Scrum*. 5.10 *1.30pm Welsh Lobby*.

ITV/London

6.00 **GMTV**. 6.00 *The Sunday Review*. 6.30 *News* and Sport. 7.00 *The Sunday Programme* (595259).
 8.00 **Disney Club**. The guests are magician Geoffrey Durham, posters ETC, and *EastEnders* Dean Gaffney and John Pickard (S) (35057762).
 10.15 **Link**. Car insurance problems for the disabled (S) (3573109).
 10.30 **This Sunday**. With Paul Heiney and Jenni Murray. Including 11.00 Morning Worship from Emmanuel Church, Stoughton, Guildford (S) (31884).
 12.30 **CrossTalk** (Followed by London Weather) (47722).
 1.00 **News**. Weather (23664451).
 1.10 **Jonathan Dimbleby** (S) (5219074).
 2.00 **Opening Shot**. Children's arts magazine (S) (1068).
 2.30 **The Sunday Match**. Southend vs Crystal Palace. George Graham is a guest (63164426).
 5.10 **Rags to Riches**. Rag trade documentary series (S) (7737451).
 5.40 **The London Programme** (858277).
 6.10 **London Tonight**. Weather (669971).
 6.30 **News**. Weather (694432).
 6.40 **Schoolfield's Quest**. Brian Blessed, archaeologists from Liverpool University, and a dowser try to uncover the resting place of King Arthur. What a task (S) (797950).
 7.30 **Heartbeat**. An unexploded wartime bomb is discovered. No such luck, I'm afraid (S) (35600).
 8.30 **You've Been Framed!** Video quiz (S) (6567).
 9.00 **London's Burning**. Fire in a bedsit grief (S) (3703).
 10.00 **Hale and Pace** (S) (16677).
 10.30 **News**. Weather (967109).
 10.45 **The South Bank Show**. A two-parter this week: writer Jonathan Raban and jazz musician Wynton Marsalis (S) (871277).
 11.45 **London Stage**. 95. Sheridan Morley previews some more plays (765513).
 12.20 **Inside Track On... Health**. Julio Iglesias, Carol Banica, Richard Briers and Mandy Smith talk about their health (R) (822622).
 1.50 **Tenball**. Phillip Schofield again, this time with jaw-achingly old *Big Break* clone (R) (9260372).
 2.35 **Sledge Hammer**. Sledge investigates the murder of a college cheerleader (7162952).
 3.05 **Hollywood Report** (R) (S) (5170777).
 3.35 **Cue the Music**. Cue *EMF* (4561556).
 4.30 **Highdays and Holidays** (R) (S) (1412020).
 4.50 **Travel Trails**. A Welsh gold mine and the Centre for Alternative Technology (86064865).
 5.15 **Nite Bites**. *Tripe* (R) (774339).
 5.30 **News** (70662). To 6.00am.

Channel 4

6.05 **Blitz** (R) (S) (7773819).
 7.00 **The Herbs**. A new herb, Miss Jessop, is just too tidy (R) (4896451).
 7.15 **Life On Earth** (S) (35277).
 7.45 **The Great Bang** (S) (3853155).
 8.00 **The Baby-Sitters Club** (20513).
 8.30 **Where on Earth Is Carmen Sandiego?** (S) (4940155).
 8.55 **Exosquad** (S) (4025890).
 9.20 **Running the Halls** (R) (S) (9145364).
 9.45 **The Pink Panther** (S) (4669616).
 10.00 **Aaahh!!! Real Monsters!** (S) (3478600).
 10.15 **Saved by the Bell** (4912426).
 10.40 **Wise Up**. Nine to 14-year-olds create their own reportage (S) (5715242).
 11.15 **Rawhide** (255180).
 12.15 **Mission Impossible**. Plans to rescue Cardinal Vossak are put on ice (432797).
 1.15 **Football Italia**. Parma vs AC Milan (60674703).
 3.30 **Disgraced**. Scientist Edward G. Robinson masterminds the heist of the century when he hires six hoods to hit a Monte Carlo casino. With Rod Steiger, Joan Collins and Eli Wallach. Directed by Henry Hathaway. C4 premiere. Followed by *News Summary* and *Weather*. (61513).
 5.30 **Hollyoaks** (R) (S) (600).
 6.00 **The Persuaders!** Spy Joss Ackland plans to publish his memoirs - unless the playboy agents can stop him (S) (57155).
 7.00 **Equinox**. See *Preview*, p32 (S) (5161).
 8.00 **Soviet Echoes**. An American TV producer's three-year travel through music archives from the former Soviet Union which unearthed thousands of hours of unheard pieces. (S) (1109).
 9.00 **Witness**. Pipped somewhat to the post by the recent *Horizon* film about lies and lying, *Barrie Gavin's* film uses three real-life private eyes as a way in explaining the human need for deception (S) (1345).
 10.00 **Poison Ivy** (Katt Shea 1992 US). Way-above-average home-invasion thriller in which avarice turns deadly. Barrymore investigates her way into kid Sara Gilbert's home, seduces her dad (Tom Skerritt), and supplants her sick mom (Cheryl Ladd) (S) (696180).
 11.45 **The Vanishing** (George Sluizer 1988 Hol). Forget the much lesser American version (also directed by Sluizer) of this terrifying thriller - the original is a taut little gem, cataloguing a man's obsessive search for his girlfriend, who vanished into thin air at a motorway service station (908722). To 1.40am.

ITV/Regions

Anglia
 As London escape. 12.30pm *Diagnosis* (47722). 2.00 *Tempest* (808258). 2.30 *News* (795109). 3.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 3.30 *News* (795109). 4.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 4.30 *News* (795109). 5.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 5.30 *News* (795109). 6.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 6.30 *News* (795109). 7.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 7.30 *News* (795109). 8.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 8.30 *News* (795109). 9.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 9.30 *News* (795109). 10.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 10.30 *News* (795109). 11.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 11.30 *News* (795109). 12.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221).
Central
 As London escape. 2.00pm *It's Your Show* (1068). 2.30 *The General* (S) (854513). 3.00 *Waiting for the Sun* (62481). 3.30 *News* (795109). 4.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 4.30 *News* (795109). 5.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 5.30 *News* (795109). 6.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 6.30 *News* (795109). 7.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 7.30 *News* (795109). 8.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 8.30 *News* (795109). 9.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 9.30 *News* (795109). 10.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 10.30 *News* (795109). 11.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221). 11.30 *News* (795109). 12.00 *Children's BBC* (1117221).
ITV
 As London escape. 12.30pm *News*. 1.00 *News*. 1.30 *News*. 2.00 *News*. 2.30 *News*. 3.00 *News*. 3.30 *News*. 4.00 *News*. 4.30 *News*. 5.00 *News*. 5.30 *News*. 6.00 *News*. 6.30 *News*. 7.00 *News*. 7.30 *News*. 8.00 *News*. 8.30 *News*. 9.00 *News*. 9.30 *News*. 10.00 *News*. 10.30 *News*. 11.00 *News*. 11.30 *News*. 12.00 *News*.
West Midlands
 As London escape. 12.30pm *News*. 1.00 *News*. 1.30 *News*. 2.00 *News*. 2.30 *News*. 3.00 *News*. 3.30 *News*. 4.00 *News*. 4.30 *News*. 5.00 *News*. 5.30 *News*. 6.00 *News*. 6.30 *News*. 7.00 *News*. 7.30 *News*. 8.00 *News*. 8.30 *News*. 9.00 *News*. 9.30 *News*. 10.00 *News*. 10.30 *News*. 11.00 *News*. 11.30 *News*. 12.00 *News*.
West Yorkshire
 As London escape. 12.30pm *News*. 1.00 *News*. 1.30 *News*. 2.00 *News*. 2.30 *News*. 3.00 *News*. 3.30 *News*. 4.00 *News*. 4.30 *News*. 5.00 *News*. 5.30 *News*. 6.00 *News*. 6.30 *News*. 7.00 *News*. 7.30 *News*. 8.00 *News*. 8.30 *News*. 9.00 *News*. 9.30 *News*. 10.00 *News*. 10.30 *News*. 11.00 *News*. 11.30 *News*. 12.00 *News*.

Radio

Radio 1
 6.00am *Kevin Greening*. 10.00 *Dave Pearce*. 2.00 *Soul on Sunday*. 4.00 *UK Top 40*. 7.00 *Doing the Business*. See *Choice*, p32. 8.00 *Radio 1 Rocks*. 10.00 *Andy Kershaw*. 12.00 *Mark Taper*. 4.00-6.30am *Chris Warren*.
Radio 2
 6.30-8.00am *John Peel*. 8.00-9.00am *Michael Aspel*. 10.30-11.00am *Osmond Carrington*. 2.00 *Benny Green*. 3.00 *David Jacobs*. 4.00 *Tea at the Bystander*. 4.30 *Sunday Morning*. 5.00 *Chris*. 5.30 *Chris*. 6.00 *Chris*. 6.30 *Chris*. 7.00 *Chris*. 7.30 *Chris*. 8.00 *Chris*. 8.30 *Chris*. 9.00 *Chris*. 9.30 *Chris*. 10.00 *Chris*. 10.30 *Chris*. 11.00 *Chris*. 11.30 *Chris*. 12.00 *Chris*.
Radio 3
 6.15-7.00am *John Peel*. 7.00-8.00am *John Peel*. 8.00-9.00am *John Peel*. 9.00-10.00am *John Peel*. 10.00-11.00am *John Peel*. 11.00-12.00am *John Peel*.
Radio 4
 6.00-7.00am *John Peel*. 7.00-8.00am *John Peel*. 8.00-9.00am *John Peel*. 9.00-10.00am *John Peel*. 10.00-11.00am *John Peel*. 11.00-12.00am *John Peel*.
Radio 5
 6.00-7.00am *John Peel*. 7.00-8.00am *John Peel*. 8.00-9.00am *John Peel*. 9.00-10.00am *John Peel*. 10.00-11.00am *John Peel*. 11.00-12.00am *John Peel*.
Radio 6
 6.00-7.00am *John Peel*. 7.00-8.00am *John Peel*. 8.00-9.00am *John Peel*. 9.00-10.00am *John Peel*. 10.00-11.00am *John Peel*. 11.00-12.00am *John Peel*.



Choice

Tonight's episode of the music-biz documentary *Doing the Business* (7pm R1) looks at why bands that have split - Madness (left), the Buzzcocks - bother to re-form. Meanwhile, the Radio 2 Arts Programme (10pm R2) looks at early re-formers the Dorsey Brothers, apart for 20 years before commercial pressure healed the wound.
Radio 4
 6.00-7.00am *John Peel*. 7.00-8.00am *John Peel*. 8.00-9.00am *John Peel*. 9.00-10.00am *John Peel*. 10.00-11.00am *John Peel*. 11.00-12.00am *John Peel*.
Radio 5
 6.00-7.00am *John Peel*. 7.00-8.00am *John Peel*. 8.00-9.00am *John Peel*. 9.00-10.00am *John Peel*. 10.00-11.00am *John Peel*. 11.00-12.00am *John Peel*.
Radio 6
 6.00-7.00am *John Peel*. 7.00-8.00am *John Peel*. 8.00-9.00am *John Peel*. 9.00-10.00am *John Peel*. 10.00-11.00am *John Peel*. 11.00-12.00am *John Peel*.

Satellite

Sky One
 7.00am *Hour of Power* (82646). 8.00 *Hour of Power* (82646). 9.00 *Hour of Power* (82646). 10.00 *Hour of Power* (82646). 11.00 *Hour of Power* (82646). 12.00 *Hour of Power* (82646).
Sky Movies
 6.00am *Showcase* (42635). 8.00 *Fate Is the Hunter* (1964). 10.00 *Mind* (5124763). 10.05 *Special* (835484). 12.00 *Legend of the Viking* (1988). (85267). 2.00 *Moan Zero* Two (1969). (28635). 4.00 *The Secret Garden* (1993). (4797). 6.00 *To Dance with the White Dog* (1993). (35971). 8.00 *Secret Ship*. (9030158). 2.00-6.00am *Hit Mix* (892778).
Sky Sports
 7.00am *Watersports* (42600). 8.00 *Cricket - Live* (1256161). 4.00 *Tennis* (8155). 6.00 *NFL - Live* (829567). 9.00 *Cricket*. (26703). 11.30 *Powerboat World* (41635). 12.00-3.00am *WWF* (4830372).
Sky Sports 2
 7.00am *Soccer Extra* (1289513). 11.00 *Goals on Sunday* (3241819). 12.30 *Football: Havana v Hibernian* (5704548). 3.00 *Football: Queens Park Rangers v Coventry City* (11535109). 7.00 *The Big League* (5233364). 9.00 *Golf* (9846161). 11.00 *Football Special* (5790039). 12.30-1.00am *World of Speed and Beauty* (8990101).
Sky Sports 3
 7.00am *Watersports* (42600). 8.00 *Cricket - Live* (1256161). 4.00 *Tennis* (8155). 6.00 *NFL - Live* (829567). 9.00 *Cricket*. (26703). 11.30 *Powerboat World* (41635). 12.00-3.00am *WWF* (4830372).
Sky Sports 4
 7.00am *Watersports* (42600). 8.00 *Cricket - Live* (1256161). 4.00 *Tennis* (8155). 6.00 *NFL - Live* (829567). 9.00 *Cricket*. (26703). 11.30 *Powerboat World* (41635). 12.00-3.00am *WWF* (4830372).
Sky Sports 5
 7.00am *Watersports* (42600). 8.00 *Cricket - Live* (1256161). 4.00 *Tennis* (8155). 6.00 *NFL - Live* (829567). 9.00 *Cricket*. (26703). 11.30 *Powerboat World* (41635). 12.00-3.00am *WWF* (4830372).

Pastimes

Chess William Hartston

The curious thing about the Intel Grand Prix tournaments is that the strongest players keep winning. When two strong grandmasters play a two-game match at 25 minutes each game, the speed of the encounter ought to guarantee a constant supply of upsets. Yet Kasparov, Anand, Kramnik and Ivanchuk keep coming out on top, with Kasparov more on top than the others.
 Only in the London leg of this year's series did Michael Adams upset the usual pattern by winning the event. The usual favourites were bemused by Kasparov's withdrawal at the start of the event, and they all felt to unbalanced runners.
 Today's game, from the second round in Paris, sees two of the heavyweights in action. Kramnik, after losing the first game to Ivanchuk, had to win to stay in the competition. He succeeded with a brilliantly aggressive game.
White: Vladimir Kramnik
Black: Vassily Ivanchuk
 1 N3 Nf6 16 h3g6 f3g6
 2 c4 g6 17 d6 b6
 3 Nc3 d5 18 Qd5+ Kg7
 4 cxd5 Nxd5 19 Qxd5+ Qf6
 5 e4 Nxc3 20 Qh2 h5
 6 bxc3 Bg7 21 Rd1 Nc4
 7 d4 e5 22 Bxd4 Qc3+
 8 Rb1



The big picture

The Color Purple

Sun 10pm BBC2

Steven Spielberg had to wait until *Schindler's List* to receive an accolade from the Academy, but many thought he had deserved Oscar recognition several years earlier for *The Color Purple*. Despite eight nominations, though, he left the Oscars ceremony empty-handed. On balance, the Academy for once was right. Although Spielberg's adaptation of Alice Walker's tough novel about black life at the turn of the century starring Whoopi Goldberg drips with good intentions, it is just trying too hard to be likeable.

Doing anything this evening between ten and midnight? Play your cards wrong and you could end up on *Police Action Live* (Sat 10pm ITV). As a sanctimonious priest, you suddenly realise that this is, yep, the son of the man who plays Keo Barlow in *Coronation Street*.

If modern priests are little more than social workers, then, as this week's *Equinox* (Sun C4) makes plain, modern physicists are verging on the priestly. As quantum physicists get closer and closer to the origins of the universe, more and more of them are wondering exactly what happened before the Big Bang.

As one quark-observer puts it - the laws of physics randomly creating life on Earth are about as likely as a whirlwind crossing a scrapyard and assembling a jumbo jet. Before you fall on your knees, however, you should know that the tone of Peter Webber's film is sceptical. As one physicist says of a colleague who claims to have found a scientific basis for life after death: "Just because he's got a PhD he thinks he can say anything."

Just as mysterious as the workings of the universe closet and pulling out a shiny black leather bomber jacket. Roache was last seen playing a black-market spiv with the lady-diller twinkle in *Seaforth*. As a sanctimonious priest, you suddenly realise that this is, yep, the son of the man who plays Keo Barlow in *Coronation Street*.

Television preview

RECOMMENDED VIEWING THIS WEEKEND
by Gerard Gilbert



Tx Sat 8.05pm BBC2
Priest Sat 9.05pm BBC2
Police Action Live Sat 10pm ITV
Equinox Sun 7pm C4
The Art Marathon Sun 7.35pm BBC2



The big match

England vs South Africa

Sat 2.05pm BBC1

After the autumn has had, Will Carling (above) must be mightily relieved to be appearing again on the back rather than the front pages of the popular press. Against South Africa this afternoon, he leads out a team with a completely new spine, following the departure of Brian Moore, Dean Richards and Rob Andrew. The challenge for England will be to match deeds to their stirring words about dynamic rugby. That is easier said than done against world champions South Africa, who have the most impressive defence this side of Fort Knox.

Saturday Television and Radio

BBC1

- 7.25 News: Weather (7429863).
- 7.30 Children's BBC: Superted (3987166). 7.40 Willy Fog (1012295). 8.05 The Addams Family (3298895).
- 8.30 The New Adventures of Superman. A criminal is dating Lois Lane's sister (R) (S) (3333586).
- 9.15 Live and Kicking. Casualty actor Clive Mantle and popsters Boyzone want a word with your kids (S) (22722963).
- 12.12 Weather (9550554).
- 12.15 Grandstand. Steve Rider hosts from Twickenham. 12.20 Football Focus. 12.25 and 1.15 Racing: From Aintree, with races at 12.30, 1.00 and 1.35pm; and from Ascot, featuring races at 12.45, 1.20 and 1.55pm. 1.10 News. 2.05 Rugby Union: Live coverage of England vs South Africa (kick-off 2.30pm). Plus highlights of Scotland vs Western Samoa, and Ireland vs Fiji. 4.45 Final Score (3701216).
- 5.20 News: Weather (5971586).
- 5.30 Local News. Weather (585963).
- 5.35 Dad's Army. Mainwaring is in court after a light is left burning in the church hall (R) (468654).
- 6.05 Jim Davidson's Generation Game. Zsa Zsa Gabor, Jim Bowen and Willy Torme are the guests (S) (364296).
- 7.00 News: House Party. Gary Rhodes earns a Gotcha (S) (835654).
- 7.50 The National Lottery Live. A specially extended edition - which might be pushing it - to mark the first anniversary of the National Lottery (S) (865166).
- 8.15 Casualty. A jockey has an accident (S) (703005).
- 9.05 News and Sport: Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) (319876).
- 9.25 Stalking Laura (Michael Switzer 1993 US). You'd think that young women being stalked by lone males was a national obsession instead of an over-used plot device for the TV-movie industry. This one stars Brooke Shields in a belated attempt at serious acting, and Richard "John Boy" Thomas belatedly chucking away his nice guy *Wall to Wall* image (S) (1749437).
- 10.55 Match of the Day. Highlights of two big derby games: Liverpool vs Everton, and Tottenham Hotspur vs Arsenal (S) (3510499).
- 12.00 The Stand Up Show (S) (44819).
- 12.30 Cannon for Cordoba (Paul Wendkos 1970 US). Taco-western set south of the border around about 1912, where army captain George Peppard has to retrieve cannons stolen by outlaw Pat Vallone during the Mexican revolution. You know the score: unshaven men in big hats spitting and grinning a lot (S) (576567).
- 2.10 Weather (7260548). To 2.15am.
- REGIONS. Wales: 4.55pm Wales on Saturday. 5.30 Wales on Saturday. 5.55 Cartoon. NI: 2.05pm Rugby Union. 5.00 Northern Ireland Results. 5.30 Inside Ulster News. 2.10 Inside Ulster News.

BBC2

- 8.20 Open University: Developing World (1009302). 8.45 Energy at the Crossroads (4049470). 9.10 Putting Training to Work (9154012). 9.35 Becoming a Student (7249741).
- 10.00 Chantalya. Hindu saga (S) (2518505).
- 10.40 Video Byte. Asian pop (S) (1471302).
- 10.50 Network East. Naseeruddin Shah and Shyam Benegal guest (S) (1111128).
- 11.20 Bollywood or Bust? (2201963).
- 11.50 Film 95 with Barry Norman (1165654).
- 12.20 Close Up. Volker Schlöndorff chooses Billy Wilder's *The Apartment*, while Mary Whitehouse opts for Harold Lloyd in *Safety Last* (7845944).
- 12.35 Wildlife on Two. Midnight and midday at the oasis (R) (9581760).
- 1.05 Command Decision (Sam Wood 1948 US). Clark Gable no doubt brought his own experience as a wartime fighter bomber pilot to bear on his surprisingly heavyweight portrayal as a US Air Force Commander torn apart by the fact that he must send his men on what amounts to a suicide mission over Germany (3873741).
- 2.50 Soldier of Fortune (Edward Dmytryk 1955 US). Clark Gable in his more habitual lighter vein in this breezy CinemaScope melodrama co-starring Susan Hayward as an American woman in Hong Kong, whether she has gone to search for her missing photographer husband (2177692).
- 4.25 Best of Esther. Men with dangerous jobs, including racing driver Derek Warwick and jockey Declan Murphy (R) (S) (6636296).
- 4.55 The Oprah Winfrey Show. People who have either been separated at birth, given up for adoption or - like Oprah and her audience - lost touch with one another (R) (S) (6944692).
- 5.35 TOTP. Pop then and now (S) (954708).
- 6.20 One Man and His Dog (S) (632234).
- 7.05 News and Sport: Weather (223031).
- 7.20 Assignment: How Asia seems to have succeeded where the West has failed - in revolutionising their economies without losing social cohesion (930677).
- 8.05 Tx. Profile of influential Hollywood magician Ricky Jay. See Preview (243073).
- 8.55 Close Up. Mike Leigh on François Truffaut's *Jules et Jim* (S) (581012).
- 9.05 Screen Two: Priest. See Preview (S) (49218741).
- 10.50 Have I Got News for You. From last night, with guests Alan Coren and Terry Christian (S) (391147).
- 11.20 Later with Jools Holland (S) (180079).
- 12.00 Shy People (Andrei Konchalovsky 1988 US). New York journalist Jill Clayburgh takes her daughter Martha Plimpton down the bayou to meet the Louisiana branch of the family - and gets caught up in increasingly silly *Deliverance*-style shenanigans (S) (242838). To 2.00am.
- REGIONS. NI: 5.35pm Rugby Union.

ITV/London

- 6.00 GMTV. 6.00 News: Weather. 6.10 Re:Win.d. 6.40 Eat Your Words. 7.10 Barney and Friends. 7.45-8.55 Saturday Disney. Chelsea's Rud Gullitt is a guest. 8.55 Mighty Morphin Power Rangers (S) (117788).
- 9.25 Scratchy & Co. Les Ferdinand's wardrobe and Neighbour Dan Falzon in the flesh (S) (7505234).
- 11.30 The Chart Show. David Bowie is in the video vault (R) (S) (43654).
- 12.30 SpeakEasy. Sonya from Echobelly on her mixed Indian/English upbringing (S) (27586).
- 1.00 News. Weather (36750514).
- 1.05 Local News. Weather (37100055).
- 1.10 Champions League Special (23745465).
- 1.40 Movies. Game and Hides (4588895).
- 2.15 Carlton Time (76305296).
- 2.20 The A-Team. The boys find themselves in the Middle East (R) (8844215).
- 3.15 Airwolf (R) (15205).
- 4.15 SpeakEasy Does the Business. More dream jobs considered. This week, two teenagers hit the catwalk (S) (151741).
- 4.45 News. Sport: Weather (7791031).
- 5.05 London Tonight and Sport (3221673).
- 5.20 New Baywatch. Logan takes Cody's car without permission and CJ befriends a lost sea lion (S) (4977079).
- 6.15 Chatterbox (S) (131147).
- 7.15 Blind Date. Michael and Juanita discuss their Florida lair (Including Lottery Result) (S) (20031).
- 8.15 Raise the Roof. A cottage in Cornwall to the winner (S) (436944).
- 8.45 News. National Lottery Update: Weather (246437).
- 9.00 40 Days of ITV Laughter. Denis Norden is the avuncular link man for clips of John Cleese, Benny Hill, Spike Milligan, Tommy Cooper, Julian Clary and (going back a bit here) Jimmy James (S) (2437).
- 10.00 Police Action Live. Cameras follow four police forces across Britain as the pubs empty across the land. See Preview (4363).
- 12.00 Big Fight Special. Paul Wier of Scotland takes on South Africa's "Baby" Jake Mathele for the WBO light-flyweight crown (2636890).
- 12.45 American Gladiators. Like the British Gladiators, but with bigger teeth (S) (3703513).
- 1.40 The Big E (S) (7982258).
- 2.30 BPM (S) (8643093).
- 3.25 Best of British Motorsport (3776635).
- 3.50 The Abominable Dr Phibes (Robert Fuest 1971 UK). Stylish art deco sets, a tongue-in-cheek script and Vincent Price firing on all cylinders make this *Hammer* outing worth catching. He plays a madman bent on revenge for the death of his wife, supervised by Joseph Cotton and Terry-Thomas.
- 5.30 News (306161). To 6.00am.

Channel 4

- 6.05 Sesame Street (R) (7787012).
- 7.05 Ovide (R) (7375963).
- 7.15 Sonic the Hedgehog (R) (2862514).
- 7.40 First Edition (7514234).
- 8.00 Trans World Sport (70499).
- 9.00 The Morning Line. The past week, plus a preview of today's racing card (S) (44437).
- 10.00 Blitz! American football action with the NFL (S) (73302).
- 11.00 Gazzetta Football Italia (93166).
- 12.00 Sign On. The problems faced by deaf prisoners (S) (26532).
- 12.30 The Great Maratha (9596692).
- 12.55 The Late Late Show. Come in Dublin (S) (8915418).
- 1.55 Dive Bomber (Michael Curtiz 1941 US). World War Two thriller with Errol Flynn as a US Navy flight surgeon working to find a way to stop pilots blacking out during power dives (4116494).
- 4.25 Fint Finger and a Thumb. John Wilson signs his short story, *Dolls' Ears* (2856876).
- 4.30 The Snow Session. London's first ever snow mountain was built in Covent Garden at the end of last month for the Snowboard Cup. Presented by Normski, The Snow Session includes music from up-and-coming band Honky (S) (6936673).
- 5.05 Brookside Omnibus (R) (S) (8353128).
- 6.30 Right to Reply. With both BBC and ITV having recently appointed new heads of comedy, a review of the world of sitcoms (S) (673).
- 7.00 A Week in Politics (4395).
- 8.00 21st Century Jek. The Boeing 777 enters the test stage (S) (2465).
- 9.00 The Camomile Lawn. A/S. Renun Mary Wesley saga (R) (S) (4702215).
- 10.05 Roy Porter - Who Else? (S) (234079).
- 10.45 Street Porter's Men. Paul O'Grady, the man behind Lily Savage, and Neil Bartlett, artistic director of the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith (S) (446521).
- 11.15 Magic (Richard Attenborough 1978 US). A curious project for Sir Dickie - being William Goldman's adaptation of his own hackneyed novel about a ventriloquist (Anthony Hopkins at his most annoyingly ponderous) being "taken over" by his dummy, Burgess Meredith is good, however, as Hopkins's agent (314963).
- 1.15 Blood on Satan's Claw (Piers Haggard 1970 UK). Post-Witchfinder General romp around 17th-century England way, with Patrick Wymark as a judge trying to stamp out the occult among local children (885819).
- 3.00 Dr Blood's Coffin (Sidney J Furie 1960 UK). Fairly explicit and gory (for its day) low-budget shocker in which doctor Kieron Moore - experimenting in transplant surgery in a Cornish village - discovers a potion for bringing the dead back to life (235155). To 4.40am.

ITV/Regions

- ASLIA
As London except: 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (27586). 1.05 Regional News and Weather (37100055). 1.40 The Big Eye (25301944). 2.10 Film: Young Again (758673). 3.45 Airwolf (151876). 5.05 Regional News. Weather (5994437). 5.10 Time Full Time (8738147). Yorks: Scoreline (8738147). 12.45am Knight Rider (559890). 2.25am News Headlines: BPM (4721838). 3.25am The Little Picture Show (6501890). 4.20am The Music (3249242). 5.15-5.30am Profile (187057).
- TYNE/TEES/YORKSHIRE
As London except: 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (27586). 1.05 Regional News. Weather (37100055). 1.40 Film: A New Kind of Love (17761296). 3.45 Airwolf (151876). 5.05 Regional News. Weather (5994437). 5.10 Time Full Time (8738147). Yorks: Scoreline (8738147). 12.45am Knight Rider (559890). 2.25am News Headlines: BPM (4721838). 3.25am The Little Picture Show (6501890). 4.20am The Music (3249242). 5.15-5.30am Profile (187057).
- CENTRAL
As London except: 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (27586). 1.05 Regional News and Weather (37100055). 1.40 Cartoon Time (15654692). 1.45 Movies, Games and Videos (197418). 2.15 WCW Worldwide Wrestling (3394925). 3.00 Airwolf (7781760). 3.55 Thunder in Paradise (7802383). 5.05 Central News and Weather (5994437). 5.10 Central Match News: Come (8738147). 5.30am Central (2917155). 5.20-5.30am Asian Eye (4835971).
- ITV
As London except: 12.30pm West: No Naked Flames (27586). Wales: The Electric Chair (27586). 1.05 Regional News (37100055). 1.45 Movies, Games and Videos (197418). 2.15 The Munsters Today (70998708). 2.40 Cartoon Time (6008383). 2.45 Thunder in Paradise (155692). 3.45 Airwolf (151876). 5.05 Regional News (8731234). 5.15-5.20pm Cartoon Time (598578).
- MERIDIAN
As London except: 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (27586). 1.05 News (37100055). 1.40 Go Fishing (25301944). 2.10 The Big Eye (70999437). 2.35 Warner Cartoon (2353760). 2.55 Time Trax (880296). 3.45 Knight Rider (151876). 5.05 News (8731234). 5.15 Warner Cartoon (598578). 3.25am Film: Block Busters (8671074). 4.35am America's Top Ten (8607600). 5.00-5.30am Freezone (55180).
- WESTCOUNTRY
As London except: 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (27586). 1.05 News (37100055). 1.40 Film: The Dam Cat (32580079). 5.00 Knight Rider (5245760). 5.05-5.20pm News (3221673).
- S4C
As C4 except: 7.10am Ovide (7375963). 7.20 Sonic the Hedgehog (7514237). 7.45 First Edition (7514237). 8.00 The Persuaders! (93166). 12.30pm Exotica (9596692). 4.30 The Snow Session (6936673). 6.30 Hollyoaks (673). 7.00 News (223031). 7.15 News Live (228973). 8.15 News (228973). 8.45 News (228973). 9.15 Match Y Marnu (706470). 10.45-11.15pm Street Porter's Men (446521).

Radio

- Radio 1
(97499) 9.00am: 10.00am Kevin Greening. 10.00 Dave Pearce. 10.30am Danny Baker. 11.00am The Saturday Show with Jo Whiteley. 11.30am The Saturday Show. 12.00pm John Peel. 12.30am Danny Baker. 1.00am The Saturday Show. 1.30am John Peel. 2.00am The Saturday Show. 2.30am John Peel. 3.00am The Saturday Show. 3.30am John Peel. 4.00am The Saturday Show. 4.30am John Peel. 5.00am The Saturday Show. 5.30am John Peel. 6.00am The Saturday Show. 6.30am John Peel. 7.00am The Saturday Show. 7.30am John Peel. 8.00am The Saturday Show. 8.30am John Peel. 9.00am The Saturday Show. 9.30am John Peel. 10.00am The Saturday Show. 10.30am John Peel. 11.00am The Saturday Show. 11.30am John Peel. 12.00am The Saturday Show. 12.30am John Peel. 1.00am The Saturday Show. 1.30am John Peel. 2.00am The Saturday Show. 2.30am John Peel. 3.00am The Saturday Show. 3.30am John Peel. 4.00am The Saturday Show. 4.30am John Peel. 5.00am The Saturday Show. 5.30am John Peel. 6.00am The Saturday Show. 6.30am John Peel. 7.00am The 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